

which had basically been achieved prior to the legislation. Nevertheless, Prost's criticisms of sociological approaches to French education seem too harsh. Not only have sociologists but also historians of the *Annales* school emphasized the *longue durée*. Indeed he acknowledges the contribution of historians such as François Furet and Jacques Ozouf (*Lire et écrire: l'alphabétisation des français de Calvin à Jules Ferry*, 1977), although he criticizes their conclusion about relationships between schooling and literacy. Prost makes a mistake that too many historians and social scientists still make—attempting to find causality within statistical correlations. Correlations and regression analysis illuminate *association*; they say nothing about causality. This misunderstanding of statistical argument as well as a prediction for political history results in too harsh a dichotomy drawn between political history and a history that emphasizes long-term trends. The two are not incompatible. It is important to study political initiatives, the motivating forces behind them, and their immediate results even if a longer-term perspective finds more continuity than change.

Prost is certainly correct in describing the loi Guizot of 1833 as one of the important pieces of legislation concerning French education—perhaps even the most important after Napoleon. It encouraged schooling, established normal schools, provided state subsidies, and prescribed curriculum. Without it, the public school system in France might not have come to dominate the plethora of private schools that were developing. Never-

theless, the loi Guizot merely defined the arena within which private and public schools, those for boys and girls (schools in France were generally segregated by sex), and levels of schooling performed. Social processes operated and important modifications occurred with each generation (e.g. Victor Duruy in the 1860s and Ferry in the 1880s). However, situated within prior and subsequent developments in enrolment, attendance, and teacher training, the Guizot Law appears to have accentuated extant tendencies rather than redirecting French schooling.

It is too early to decide whether recent "reforms" have or will significantly alter an educational system that has displayed a remarkable structural continuity over two centuries. Social forces and vested interests have prevailed over many ministers and critics. Prost clearly hopes for reform and although the essays are historical they contain within them some of the author's own agenda. The collection is an informed, intelligent commentary on many contemporary issues in French education, but they are disparate. We still await a comprehensive analysis of French schooling since the Second World War.

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Peter A. Schouls. *Reasoned Freedom: John Locke and Enlightenment.* Ithaca and London:

Cornell University Press, 1992. Pp. xii, 237. \$13.95 U.S. paper.

John Yolton rates this book as one of "the better books" on Locke. Containing "a rare close reading" of his work, Yolton comments, it exhibits as well "a thorough and sensitive understanding" of his thought on many important doctrines and issues and "a number of new interpretations" (back cover page). The reader will indeed find it difficult to disagree with Yolton, who commends the book despite its criticisms of his own interpretations. His commendation, however, falls short of something more positive. He does not say, for instance, that Schouls' reading and understanding are correct or proper. His "rare close" reading is, strictly, of those writings under focus. His "thorough and sensitive" understanding, too, is specific in terms of the aspect of Locke's thought he deals with. If based on such a selective and specific reading and understanding, as is usual in interpretative studies, his "new interpretations" may not be free from the problem often found in such studies, namely, emphasis on some points to the neglect of some others. Exploration of these neglected points may help sharpen Schouls' new interpretations.

This job requires examination of Schouls' conclusions and the way he reaches them because his new interpretations emerge from his meticulous movement towards certain pre-set conclusions. They are that Locke was a revolutionary who was also a dogmatist, and that his work as a whole was "far more coherent than most

commentators have been able to see or willing to grant" (p. 232). The second conclusion is not really a conclusion. What is here claimed to be coherent is not Locke's work itself but Locke's work as read by Schouls. This claim is evaluative of Schouls' interpretation rather than Locke's work. Regarding the first conclusion, Locke the dogmatist is a notion brought in to qualify another notion, Locke the revolutionary. Therefore Schouls has just one conclusion, and that is that Locke was a revolutionary, specifically, of the Cartesian kind. How, then, does he move to this conclusion?

Up front, Schouls places Locke between Descartes and the Enlightenment to characterize him as an intermediary—a disciple of the former yet the mentor of the latter. He seems to follow this logic: Descartes influenced the Enlightenment, so did Locke; the two thinkers' discourses shared a similarity in that what was at the heart of one discourse was also at the heart of the other; since Descartes could not learn it from Locke, Locke must have learned it from Descartes. Schouls has elsewhere dubbed the mentor as a revolutionary. He now says the disciple, too, was a revolutionary. The problem with this logic—to address this first—may be clear in Schouls' question, "Can Locke be a revolutionary if he is a *follower* of a revolutionary?" (p. 30). Should one not be a revolutionary if one joined a revolution led by someone else? Schouls' answer is of course in the affirmative. Why then does he pose this question? A part of the answer is to be seen in his tricky definition that revolutionaries are those who start *de*

novo (tricky, because revolutionaries do not always do so). Another part of the answer may be hinted at by the effect this question has. Consider this: while an already clear point is being addressed unnecessarily, another important question eludes: did Locke indeed follow Descartes considering things other than the discursive similarity? or why should he stand only between Descartes and the Enlightenment? Reading Locke's work in the Cartesian light is undoubtedly a legitimate approach, yet in effect this reading forces Locke's thought into a given framework. Let us see how it does so.

In Schouls' view, Descartes was a revolutionary because he taught to start *de novo*. In epistemology, he believed that knowledge required certain foundational ideas characterized by their being "simple," "self-evident," or "clear and distinct." These ideas enable grasping a complex phenomenon in their clear interrelations. In this epistemology, therefore, each individual seeking knowledge has to start with simple ideas and, for this, reduce given beliefs down to such simple ideas instead of accepting them as "given." As well, the individual has to distil context-bound experiences to contextless, self-evident ideas. In practice, this teaching implies individualism because what is self-evident has to be so primarily to the individual himself/herself. Now, as commentators notice, Locke also had individualism in his political thought and this individualism had revolutionary implications. Yet the commentators fail to see that his individualism as well stemmed from his epistemol-

ogy, which was as reductive as in Descartes' case in reaching down to simple ideas as the starting-point of mental operation. Schouls' relating political individualism to epistemic individualism is simple. The reductive method is adopted in order thereby to attain general knowledge, which in turn allows reason's government of its owner's conduct. And individuals whose conduct is governed by reason are free "masters" of themselves—because they obey nothing but their own reason. They are also revolutionaries because they start *de novo* with what conforms to their own reason. Hence, the reductive epistemology for attaining general knowledge was a political and educational methodology for the revolutionary goal of making a free individual.

This Cartesian light guides Schouls to a new view of Locke's thought. Saying that reason's government of an individual's conduct means freedom requires saying that reason pertains to human nature. Otherwise, reason's government would mean conduct's subjection to something impertinent to nature. In the existing literature, however, opinion is divided about whether Locke had a concept of human nature. Some, obviously drawing upon the concept of *tabula rasa*, deny he had this concept while others recognize it, apparently referring to the concept of reflection or reasoning (p. 39). Schouls sides with the latter. The ground for this is Locke's statement that human beings are born to be master. Since the master requires the power of reflection or reasoning, those who are born to be master must have this power inherently. Schouls moves

even further to say that all human creatures in Locke's view are born rational, "universally and uniformly." If so, then, the conventional view of Locke as an environmentalist is wrong. We are by nature rational universally and uniformly, so reason works in us universally and uniformly. This is to say that when our reason reduces things down to the foundational simple ideas they do so universally and uniformly or that reason's conclusions are universal and uniform, i.e., "contextless." If we abide by these conclusions, then, we act regardless of the environmental context.

This yields for Schouls another new interpretation regarding the concepts of *tabula rasa* and reward and punishment. In the conventional reading, *tabula rasa* as the mind's initial state is literally a blank slate on which the educator has to write. The means for this is the administration of reward and punishment, the former to encourage what one does and the latter to discourage it. Given that reason is natural to people, this conventional view has to be wrong, for reason empowers them to write on the slate and wipe it out in order thus to start anew. As well, the administration of reward and punishment does not necessarily mean that people are passive nor that the administrator moulds their minds, because natural reason will enable them to "reason out" what is and is not acceptable to the administrator.

It should be noted that these Cartesian interpretations do not actually invalidate the conventional non-Cartesian reading. Locke's advocacy of reason-governed freedom and his normative idea that human creatures are

born to be master may well be important ingredients of his thought. Yet the conventional view of Locke as an environmentalist is not based on these ingredients; rather, it draws upon his descriptive model of the human mind which is initially vacant. Whether or not the mind's vacancy implies its having no nature may well be debatable. Within this model, however, human creatures at the outset of a life cannot be rational by nature. Were they to be rational, they would be so only potentially. In order for them to write or wipe out what has been written, they must first actualize this potential reason. The question, then, is whether they can actualize it when their "blank slate" is initially written on by someone else. Schouls' Cartesian light does not illuminate this question. Also left aside is the effect of administering reward and punishment upon the actualization of reason. Reward and punishment involve two parties: the one to administer them and the other to be administered upon. In their interrelationship, it is invariably the former that prevails. So if the potential reason actualizes solely as a result of reward and punishment, the actualized reason has to be a duplication of that which dwells in the administrator's mind. This "reason" can be reason properly if the latter is defined as universal, uniform, and contextless, as in Schouls' reading. Schouls might be right and Locke might indeed believe that reason was universal, uniform, and contextless. It is exactly here, however, that Locke's descriptive model contradicts his normative teaching because the vacant mind takes in only what is given and

this given is *by nature* particular, various, and contextual.

Was Locke, then, a Cartesian revolutionary?

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Marie-Madeleine Compère and Dolorès Pralon-Julia, eds. *Performances scolaires de collégiens sous l'Ancien Régime: Étude de six séries d'exercices latin rédigés au collège Louis-le-Grand vers 1720.* Paris: Institut national de recherche pédagogique/Publications de la Sorbonne, 1992. Pp. 266. 130 F.

Historians of state-supported education since the nineteenth century are typically awash in documents. From Ontario to Galicia, the story was the same: about a century and a half ago, a mania for documents and records seized educators and their clients. The happy result was bulging archives. If the historian has difficulty with these archival riches, it is the trouble of *selecting* evidence fairly and representatively.

The contrast with the eighteenth or any earlier century is painful. Even in centralized and bureaucratized France, whole aspects of eighteenth-century educational experience are barely documented, much evidence having been destroyed or lost. It is a matter of delight and surprise when an archive unexpectedly produces an exception to the rule. *Performances Scolaires* is based on recently dis-

covered manuscript evidence of a largely undocumented but familiar educational activity—classroom translation to and from Latin, in prose and in verse.

Compère and Pralon-Julia found the manuscripts for this study in the Bibliothèque Nationale. In the early 1720s, the librarian of the Collège Louis-le-Grand was a certain Père Hardouin. This erudite man was forced out of teaching, and finally out of librarianship at the collège, when his ultra-conservative publications became theologically embarrassing to the Society of Jesus. Since the collège was the Jesuits' flagship educational institution in France, the publicity was unwelcome. Hardouin's publishing career thus came to an abrupt end, but not his private scholarly work. In old age, Père Hardouin wrote tracts on the Apocrypha, on the theological significance of the Mass, and on the errors of atheism. Being poverty-stricken, he could not afford the paper on which to write, and his former teacher-colleagues must have given him bundles of used exercise sheets from their Latin classes. Hardouin wrote on the backs of these sheets. His papers were later bound and deposited in the Bibliothèque Nationale. We have the boys' Latin exercises through Hardouin's (temporary) notoriety.

The boys at Louis-le-Grand were by 1720 mainly boarders (*pensionnaires, internes*) from Paris and from central and northern France. From "good" families, these pupils could read and write French when they arrived at school. In most cases, the boys spent their entire adolescence (as we would call it) at the collège, and their