

International Conference

From school inspectors to school inspection.

Supervision of schools in Europe from the Middle Ages to Modern times

Organizers: The National Pedagogical Museum and the Library of J. A. Comenius, the Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, the Faculty of Science, Humanities and Education of Technical University in Liberec, in cooperation with the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Lehr- und Forschungsbereich Historische Bildungsforschung.

Term and place of the conference: 9th–10th September 2020, Prague, The National Pedagogical Museum and the Library of J. A. Comenius

Length of presentations: 20 minutes

Conference languages: English, German and Czech

The issue of supervision and inspection of education represents an essential and hitherto neglected theme of historical-educational research. The research often focuses mainly on the personalities of educational reformers who determined changes in educational concepts and founded educational and training institutions, leading to the transformation of education and training to a greater or lesser extent. In this perspective, the “progress” of education is unstoppable. However, it is clear that the course of school education and the processes of training and education are also largely determined by “anonymous” laws and other regulations that correspond to the interests of “cultural reproduction” of society (Pierre Bourdieu).

In the “field of school conduct”, an essential role is played by the institutions of supervision and inspection of education and individual personalities promoting supervisory practices and applying sanctions in case of non-compliance or gross violation of the given order. The supervision of education is thus a cultural symbol of the times. The role and function of the supervision of education and training can be analyzed within a historical context or an applicable cultural pattern; the “impersonal rules” of supervision, but also the “mental habitus” of supervisors or inspectors can be reconstructed.

The conference will focus on the analysis and reconstruction of the processes of “supervision” of education, the system and practices of the exercise of inspection power, and the “physics” of supervisory power (Michel Foucault). It will analyze external symbols (regulations, minutes or protocols, inspection reports, inspection institutions including their material support) as well as “invisible”, internalized and thus “natural” customs or procedures in inspection processes, and also rules and a scenario of the “presentation” of the supervision of training and education.

Last but not least, the issue of changes in the supervisory processes of the relationship between external control and mechanisms of the autonomous education management will be explored. Medieval, early modern and modern education at all levels represented a fundamental means for the church or the state to consolidate and legitimize the power of church, state and

other institutions (cities) that determined the order and image of the world at the time. Therefore, supervision of education was an important area of concern for both spiritual and political power. The practices of supervising education in the medieval, early modern and modern systems were rather diverse, but they had a common denominator: the interest of “higher” power. In the post-modern era, within an open, “liquid” society that permanently reflects the starting points of the system of power and thus relativizes them, the system of supervision of education ceases to play primarily the role of control, but is taking the form of a support of the autonomous management of educational institutions. The analysis will deal with the question of how and why this “turnaround” is happening and what it means for contemporary education.

Papers mainly concerning the following spheres are expected:

- institutions of supervision of education
- practices of supervision of education
- obvious and “invisible” actors of supervision
- the means of supervision
- sources of school supervision and their methodological processing
- institutionalization of school supervision
- the authority and power of the means and actors of supervision
- a “free” school without supervision
- autonomous school management

Please send paper proposals with a short summary (max. 3000 marks in English or German) and CV no later than **15th January 2020** to the e-mail address: inspector@npmk.cz.

The organizers will send a notification of acceptance of the contribution no later than **28th February 2020**. The organizational committee of the conference reserves the right to the selection of the papers.

If they successfully pass the review process, the studies based on the presented papers will be published.