

Laudatio Marc Depaepe

Marc Depaepe was born in Kortrijk 3 February 1953 and is a professor of history of education and history of psychology at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, campus Kulak (Flanders, Belgium). He followed lower secondary education at Sint-Amandschool (South) in Kortrijk and higher secondary education at the Sint-Jozefsinstituut in Torhout. At the University of Leuven he studied Educational Sciences. He graduated from the Master of Science in 1977 and received his Ph.D in 1982 in Educational Sciences. His licentiate thesis focused on the internal organisation of the Belgian primary school. In 1989 he was awarded a special doctorate for his comparative history of the evolution of pedagogy and psychology as a science primarily in the USA, Great Britain, Germany, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Belgium. This was later published in German in 1993. In 1996, he became a full professor at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the K.U. Leuven and from 2004 at the Kulak. He has been Head of the Department of Educational Sciences in Leuven (2001-2004), Head of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Studies in Kortrijk (2004-2009) and Coordinator of the Human Sciences in Kortrijk (2007-2009). In August 2013, he was appointed for a four-year term rector at Kulak (Kortrijk) and deputy vice-chancellor at K.U. Leuven, also responsible for campuses at Bruges and Ostendstend.

Professor Depaepe is a prolific writer and according to the researchgate database has to date 159 publications, including 115 articles, 14 books, and 27 book chapters—this is a conservative figure compared to the listing on the K.U. Leuven website, e.g. as author/co-author, editor/co-editor he has published about 50 books. His research and publications can be broadly grouped around five themes: the theory, methodology and historiography of ‘historical pedagogy’ as a scientific discipline as well as a course in curricula; internationally oriented history of (psycho) pedagogy; history of education and training in Belgium with an emphasis on the elementary school; the history of colonial and postcolonial education in Africa, in particular focusing on the history of the Belgium Congo; and the history of intercultural relations in education. Within these broad areas his work has ranged from the lure of psychology to school exercise books, from everyday classroom history to missionary education, from Ovide Decroly to John Dewey, and from school documentaries to method in history of education. Among his best-known and most influential works are *On the Relationship of Theory and History in Pedagogy. An introduction to the West German discussion on the significance of the history of education (1950-1980)* (Leuven, 1983); *Zum Wohl des Kindes? Pädologie, pädagogische Psychologie und experimentelle pädagogik in Europa und den USA, 1890-1940* (Leuven, 1993); *Beyond Empiricism. On Criteria for Educational Research* (Leuven, 2003); *Order in Progress. Everyday Education Practice in Primary Schools. Belgium, 1880–1970* (Leuven, 2000); *The Forgotten Contribution of the Teaching Sisters. A Historiographical Essay on the Educational Work of Catholic Women Religious in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Leuven, 2009); *An Educational Pilgrimage to the United States. Travel Diary by Raymond Buyse, 1922* (Leuven, 2011); and *Between Educationalization and Appropriation. Selected Writings on the History of Modern Educational Systems* (Leuven, 2013). All of these works have involved some form of collaboration with other scholars and this has been a characteristic of his career from the outset when he worked with his promoter Professor Maurits De Vroede on the four volume *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van het pedagogisch leven in Belgĳ. De periodieken 1817-1940* [Contributions to the history of educational life in Belgium, the periodicals from 1817 to 1940]. Since then he has collaborated extensively with among others Angelo Van Gorp, Hilde Lauwers, Frederik Hermann and Paul Smeyers, but his most significant collaboration has been with Frank Simon whom he first worked with on the Belgian periodicals project.

Theirs has been, and continues to be, one of the most enduring, productive and influential academic partnerships in the field of history of education.

As a specialist in the historiography of education Professor Depaepe has taught courses both in Kortrijk and Leuven including *Geschiedenis van gedragswetenschappen*, *Geschiedenis van opvoeding, onderwijs en vorming* and *History of Modern Educational Systems*. As a tutor he was generous with his time and has been particularly supportive of doctoral students on their academic journey whether through formal means or his continuing involvement with the History of Education Doctoral Summer School.

Professor Depaepe has been an active member of several scientific organisations. He is a Fellow of the International Academy of Education and is currently, amongst others, Editor in Chief of *Paedagogica Historica*. He has been a member of the Editorial Board since 1990. He was President of the International Standing Conference for History of Education 1991-1994 having previously served as its Secretary. In 1993-1994, he was awarded the Sarton Medal by the University of Ghent and was made doctor honoris causa of the University of Latvia in Riga in 2015.

Professor Depaepe remains one of the most distinguished historians of education of his generation, an excellent colleague and active campaigner for our discipline.

Ian Grovesnor
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