



## The Sociology of Education in Morocco: Issues of Research, Teaching, and Epistemological Identity

**Mohammed El Idrissi**

Laboratory of Human Societies and Values  
Department of Sociology  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra, Morocco  
[mohammed.elidrissi1@uit.ac.ma](mailto:mohammed.elidrissi1@uit.ac.ma)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6554-7275>

### Abstract

This article sheds light on the educational question in the evolution of sociological practice in Morocco over the last half-century. The cradle of sociology in Morocco is associated with the decolonisation objectives of the Moroccan social sciences (practice and knowledge) and the attention paid to the rural world and agricultural issues. As a result, issues of education and schooling were treated as secondary issues in a preoccupation with the transformations of the Moroccan rural world (Paul Pascon) and with women's studies (Fatima Mernissi). The low representation of the sociology of education, research and teaching at the university and in research centres in Morocco led to a "displacement" of this discipline to teacher training centres within the branch of "sciences of education". However, this has created an identity crisis and a problematic institutionalisation for the sociology of education and the school for decades, despite the consideration given to it at the Moroccan university in recent years.

**Keywords:** Education, Sociology, Sociology of Education, sociology of school, School, Morocco.

An analysis of the state of Moroccan sociology of education requires an epistemological review of the history of the development of sociology itself in Morocco during decolonisation and the period of independence. In

addition to the objective of decolonising sociological knowledge, the founding fathers, who were Marxists and contributors to the process of development and political and social change, attempted to establish a sociological practice that combined objectivity, scientific commitment, and political struggle. The state was seen as a partner in development with its constant interest in sociological research and the rural world became the focus of sociological investigation and intervention during the 1960s and 1970s. For this reason, we can consider the history of sociology in Morocco as the history of the "ruralisation" (Rachik & Bourqia, 2011) of scientific practice and the production of sociological knowledge, and the marginalisation of other sociological fields, including the sociology of education.

Sociological studies focused on women by emphasising 'family, women, and childhood issues' during the 1970s and 1980s. Objective engagement was linked to the desire to empower and change the position of Moroccan women. Educational issues were always considered secondary variables and thus the sociology of education was again marginalised within the sociological field. As a result, the subject was displaced as a major to teacher training centres within the branch of "educational sciences".

The sociology of education was not institutionalised as a field in the Moroccan university at its lowest levels until recent years. With the development of teaching modules in master's programs and research teams in doctoral laboratories in some universities, however, the sociology of education was eventually recognised as an academic field linked to university research centres and it emerged from the controversy of epistemological identity that was associated with decades of dependence on teacher training centres.

### **Sociology in independent Morocco: starting critical, political, scientific**

The origins of sociological practice in Morocco date back to the colonial period. Its emergence was associated with Paul Pascon, as "a pioneer" (Tozy, 2013) and "the founder of sociological activity in Morocco" (Rachik, 2007: 5). Despite the context of fear, and then 'the rejection and exclusion that accompanied the process of development and institutionalisation of sociological practice in Morocco during the period of independence' (Zahi, 2014: 183), a consensus to establish the modern state was reached between the political will and sociologists during the 1960s. Pascon's group, with Najib Bouderbala, Ahmed Lahlimi, and Gregori

Lazarev (Rachik, 2007: 5), participated in the creation of the "Interdisciplinary Group for Research in the Humanities" (*EIRESH*) and the Institute of Science Researchers. They took on the task of setting up a sociological practice (decolonisation of sociological knowledge) and a committed political practice (making sociology independent of political objectives with an openness to political actors to lead social change) (Rachik and Bourqia, 2011). In addition, Pascon's group focused on issues that historical and transitional circumstances imposed on Morocco (issues of rural areas, agricultural and water policies, and women's and children's issues, for example). The group linked the production of knowledge to change the social world according to a Marxist framework that focuses on "the logic of revealing what [was] hidden and correcting a distorted or poor social reality" (Rachik, 2007: 12).

Indeed, sociology in Morocco took on profound critical dimensions opposed to both the colonial order and the "Old Morocco"; it would record the loss of traditional regulations and study the changes introduced into the social and economic fabric by the transformations of modes and relations of production (Roussillon, 2002: 458). Thus, Pascon introduced the theory of the 'composite society' to understand and analyse the "competing social orders - political, legal, social, symbolic - through which voluntary and forced transformations of modes of life and production [had] emerged" (Ibid.: 458-459).

Sociology in Morocco faced three challenges -institutionalisation of scientific practice, achievement of social change and independence from the political actor. These challenges meant that the process of institutionalising sociology went through "three major stages": 1) of political acceptance and critical commitment; 2) of rejection, leading to the closure of the Institute of Sociology (below); and 3) of "re-institutionalisation and academic recognition" (Zahi, 2014: 184). In summary, sociology was considered a major player in the construction of the modern state by the political actor in the 1960s before being rejected and fought against from the 1970s to the late 1980s. After that, it was recognised and rehabilitated from the 1990s until today.

During the first phase, sociology in Morocco was distinguished by its "political commitment" (Rachik, 2007: 10). It also maintained the necessary critical distance from the political actor in order "not to become the representative of a certain class" (Pascon, 1986c: 62). Even so, it was opened up to the political actor to institutionalise its scientific practice and

sociologists took part in social change so as not to fall into the “danger of marginalisation or self-marginalisation” (ibid.: 62). On the other hand, sociologists attempted to “decolonise sociological knowledge” by adopting a "double critique". First was a deconstruction of concepts of sociological knowledge and discourses coming from the West and marked by a Eurocentric ideology that spoke about the Arab world. Second and at the same time a critique was elaborated by the different societies of the Arab world “for their own use” (Khatibi, 1975: 1). This deep critique and call for objectivity led to replacing the ideological and religious forces of national sociology with “a more scientific purpose guided and mobilised by the concern to highlight the unifying element of Moroccan society” (EL-Maliki, 2011: 133).

The academic institutionalisation of the field was associated with the creation of the Institute of Sociology in 1960. The Institute provided training courses in sociology, demography, social statistics and cultural anthropology, and constituted a “basic structure for teaching and research before its role in teaching was limited due to lack of teachers and poor financial and logistical means” (Zahi, 2014: 184). Sociology aimed to “maintain a kind of harmony between scientific research and political engagement” (Rachik, 2007: 11) by conducting field research, training students, publishing scientific studies and research, and participating in political and social projects. On this basis, sociology interacted with political demand with a strict critical eye by questioning the “limits and ends of political generosity” (Pascon, 1986c [1979]: 61). In turn, it strived to serve the objective of "making knowledge available to the public so that knowledge contributed to change" (Pascon, 1986b: 60). As a result, the political actor sensed the "sociological danger" that led to the closure of the Institute of Sociology in 1970.

This closure gave rise to a period of rejection and hostility that was accompanied by two regional contexts. First, the events of May 1968 in France, led by students and elites in sociology and philosophy, provoked a mass uprising against the power of social and political tutelage and a declaration of a new era for freedom and individual and political rights. Second was the context of the Cold War between the United States of America and the Soviet Union and the general Western hostility to socialist projects. Sociological teaching and research in Morocco during the 1960s was associated with researchers of French-speaking origin, especially communists, and with young students carrying a dream of change. It was

clear from the process of development of training, teaching, and research that the first generation of sociologists in Morocco was "against the state" and rejected many national policies (agricultural, hydraulic, social, and so on) and used sociology as a tool to spread class consciousness among the youth and the public. As a result, the political actors felt the danger that the Institute of Sociology would turn into a breeding ground for left-wing revolutionary thought threatening the stability of a large transitional and unstable political system. Thus, the institute was closed and "sociology and sociologists [were] marginalised and pushed into secondary colleges and departments" (Madoui, 2015: 105).

The moment of rejection bridled the objective of institutionalising a genuine sociological practice in postcolonial Morocco through "the isolation of sociologists and the withdrawal of many of them from the field of scientific research or at least the focus on individual work" (Zahi, 2014: 186). However, it also contributed to "the renewal of anthropological practice" (Madoui, 2015: 105) and paved the way for a sociological approach to new questions and issues. As a result, research on women, childhood and urbanisation issues opened up a broad spectrum that enabled the issue of education to be the focus of researchers, even for those who focused on women's studies research. For example, issues of socialisation, girls' education and women's empowerment were central to the work of Fatima Mernissi with her team "Family, Women and Childhood Issues" and the "Approaches" series supervised by Aicha Belarbi (Mernissi, 1987: 7-14.).

The moment of political rehabilitation and academic recognition was associated with the death of Hassan 2<sup>nd</sup> and the accession to the throne of Mohammed 6<sup>th</sup> in 1999. At the beginning of the new millennium, sociological studies were established and became a commonplace branch in philosophy departments and the base of professors and students was broadened (Zahi, 2014: 187). However, the teaching of sociology was only introduced in all Moroccan universities in 2016 - half a century after the establishment of the praxeological conditions of Moroccan sociology by the founders.

It is difficult to say with certainty that this rehabilitation has been accompanied by a political awareness of the centrality of social science to development. The transformations of the neoliberal era imposed the evolution of the global demand for sociological expertise with the increase in the number of donors and the need of companies, international organisations as well as the political actor for sociological research to follow

the course of modernisation and lay the foundations for global development (El Idrissi, 2017). On this basis, this phase is related to the interest in education and school as central issues with the increase of official political demand (the Ministry of National Education), national institutions (the Higher Council of Education, Training and Scientific Research), international organisations and donors in a way that contributes to the emergence of sociological PhD degrees (and MA since 2016 in FLSH Ibn Tofail (Kenitra) and Moulay Ismail (Meknes) university) that focus on education issues. It should be noted that, to date, no Moroccan university offers a BA degree in the sociology of education.

According to the three phases mentioned above, it is possible to distinguish two main sociological fields that have dominated the logic of sociological teaching and research in Morocco since the dawn of independence until today. First, "the classical fields ... [have been] linked to rural sociology and political sociology" (Zahi, 2014: 188) since the 1960s in a way that makes the history of sociology in Morocco essentially a history of reflection on the rural question. These fields frame the academic institutionalisation of teaching and classical sociology departments (with the LMD [BA-MA-PhD] system) that have, since 2002, "acquired political and economic importance in the context of the application of new perceptions of social development" (Ibid.: 188) in the Moroccan university system – that is, with the process of developing "professionalisation" that links universities to the labour market and follows the social transformations of Moroccan society. Second, "the emerging fields ... are associated with the specialisations that are taught in most sociology departments in Moroccan universities" (Ibid.). In this context, the sociology of education has become a secondary and marginalised branch because it does not lead to any qualification. It is taught only in two universities and engages only a few multidisciplinary research teams due to the lack of laboratories in the sociology of education.

The main objective of the scientific and political commitment was accompanied by the challenge of the internationalisation / nationalisation of social sciences in the local space. The critique of colonial knowledge was accompanied by the Arabisation of research and training paths. However, many of the founders of sociology ended up admitting that "Arabisation has effectively isolated the new generation from an international corpus of knowledge to which their French-speaking predecessors had free access" (Roussillon, 2003: 464). Indeed, "the nationalist paradigm and the cold look

at decolonisation” (Ibid.: 465) was replaced by a more expert, political and economic demand. However, this did not prevent the reconnection between the global and the local in the production of sociological knowledge with an equation of "Publish globally and perish locally Vs. Publish locally and perish globally" (Hanafi, 2011). In addition to this, it revived some of the hidden tendencies of the Arabisation and Islamisation of sociology at the Moroccan University that require a profound rethinking of the epistemological conditions of scientific practice, the relationship between ideological and scientific foundations in the production of knowledge, and the boundaries between what is social, political and sociological in scientific publication and sociological discourse towards the public.

### **The epistemological identity of the sociology of education**

The marginalisation of the field of sociology of education in the decades following independence was due to its weak institutionalisation in Morocco. The political actor considered sociology as a revolutionary practice, and its criticism of social and educational structures as dangerous for the "Makhzen" system and the future of the monarchy itself. The sociology of education was not therefore blocked or fought but was transferred from the university to the teacher training centres. Its potential criticism was mitigated by linking it to official demand and praxeological education.

It is possible to talk about marginalisation from sociology itself. Paul Pascon considered the Moroccan educational system during the period of independence was “an imported system that does not teach us life as far as preparing the student for the labour market is concerned” (Pascon, 1986a: 29). Consequently, it was difficult to rely on the Moroccan school to lead social change, at least during this transitional period. For Pascon, effective social change "is indeed not only linked to one factor" (ibid.), but also to agricultural reforms, the equitable distribution of wealth, and the sensitisation of peasants and marginalised classes, all of which were priorities of sociological engagement and practice in the 1960s and 1970s.

Due to the spread of illiteracy, low school enrolment and the use of the education system for political purposes, Moroccan sociologists found in rural and political sociology some specialisations that could allow the institutionalisation of sociology. Furthermore, sociologists tried to change the conditions of the marginalised class by understanding the conditions of production of the social world and spreading class consciousness, as well as

by confronting the policies of exclusion that were followed by the state to impede social change. As a result, the sociology of education was marginalised within sociology in Morocco - no longer preventing the development of many studies in the field but preventing social inequalities and the selective school from getting the attention of sociologists in Morocco.

Although Pascon was satisfied with the establishment of a sociological practice in rural Morocco "for historical [the legacy of the colonial period] and political reasons [the focus on agriculture]" (Pascon, 1986b: 42), he was still "concerned about the lack of interest of social scientists in other important areas" (Ibid.). While praising the "attractiveness of urban sociology and women's studies", he implicitly encouraged researchers to pay more attention to issues of education and the Moroccan school, even under the guise of other specialisations. His study with Mekki Bentahar, "Ce que disent 296 jeunes ruraux" (Pascon & Bentahar, [1969], 1978: 145-287), made the first attempts at the sociology of youth, and school was highlighted as a secondary variable (Rachik and Bourqia, 2011). The emergence of research in the sociology of education and school is thus associated with the development of the sociology of women, family and children. This interest in women's issues did not come out of nowhere. As "the first generation of sociologists is obsessed with a Marxist ideology with a holistic worldview, subsequent generations are affected by sectoral, less organised and inclusive ideologies" (Ibid.). This brings to the surface issues of socialisation and education, alongside concern for girls, rural areas, working women, and support from international organisations and local government sectors.

It is undeniable that most sociological studies since the 1980s have been interconnected with "the interest and financial support provided by some international organisations on the issue of women and children" (Rachik, 2007: 21). For this reason, the publications of the group and Mernissi's approaches mark a new phase in the development of sociological practice in Morocco. Sociological research is no longer opposed to the state or the conduct of social change. In trying to change the social status of women (Ibid.: 16), it was found that improving the status of women depended on changing the mental and cultural foundations of socialisation, undertaking fundamental social and educational reforms, and supporting the schooling of girls and their professional and political empowerment. Therefore, socialisation and childhood become crucial concepts for sociological education (Ibid.: 20).



In the 1960s the first study in the sociology of education focusing on socialisation emerged (Radi, 1969). It is indeed associated with the rural context and later studies from a feminist perspective have focused on childhood and the girl child (the work of Aisha Belarbi for example), but these studies remain exploratory, and education is presented as a secondary variable. In addition to this, the lack of institutionalisation of the field of sociology of education is evident in the theoretical, epistemological, and even ideological discussions with which this research is involved. Often the focus is on theoretical frameworks that address the issues of girls' schooling, women's empowerment and the status of childhood, without reference to theoretical paradigms that have been specifically framed for the sociology of education – the Theory of Reproduction with Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1964) Rational Choice Theory with Raymond Boudon (Boudon, 1973), the New Sociology of Education in Britain (Young, 1971) or the Sociology of School Experience with François Dubet (Dubet & Martuccelli, 1996).

The Moroccan anthropologist Hassan Rachik confirms that “the most important sociological field that has been marginalised for decades is the field of sociology of education, which has become a marginal discipline and to which researchers have not given much importance” (Rachik, 2007: 23). Indeed, the wave of neo-liberalism requires the reconsideration of many inputs and outputs of education in terms of the link between school and the training of a skilled and semi-skilled workforce. The calls for ‘professionalisation’, to link the school to the labour market and the need of international institutions and Moroccan governmental sectors for sociological expertise in the field of education to shape an educational policy linked to professional and economic dimensions, coincides with the development of the privatisation system (that is, the promotion of private education).

As far as the development of political demand and sociological expertise is concerned, the transformations of the Moroccan school, the criticism of the political reforms and the circumstances of the transition opened the way for a group of sociologists who were interested in the "educational question", the "challenges of schooling in rural areas", "educational policies" and the "curriculum" (Muhsin 1990; Faoubar 2016, Boulahcen 2006; Boukhriss & Herhar 2018). At the beginning of the new millennium, the number of research studies, sociological studies and theses on the Moroccan school increased.

In addition to the context of the internal marginalisation of the sociology of education within the sociological practice in Morocco, it is also possible to discuss the nature of the complex relationship between the sociology of education and the sciences of education concerning issues of teaching, research, and training over the decades. While the emergence of sociology in Morocco is linked to rural issues, agricultural reforms, and later women's issues, the Moroccan state has been conducting "a reform of education based on two pillars: *first*, the centralisation of the management of the sector since the period of independence. *Secondly*, pedagogical approaches that rely on the humanities" (Lahchimi, 2015: 21). Due to the lack of Moroccan specialists and the epistemological establishment of the educational sciences during the 1950s and 1960s, the state recruited Moroccan as well as foreign researchers and teachers from the fields of sociology, philosophy and psychology (and even the educational sciences) to provide educational staff, teachers and researchers in the teacher training centres. This resulted in the institutionalisation of the sociological research career in education, but outside the university and scientific communities. It was also influenced by intervention research which frames the interaction between educational sciences and educational issues.

After the closure of the Institute of Sociology and the political rejection of sociological practice, official institutions continued to benefit from sociological experience in research, training and pedagogical supervision to train teachers and prepare reports and studies. Sociological practice in training centres and government sectors was considered a secondary specification by including it in the humanities and educational sciences in general. For this reason, the historical interrelation between the sociology of education and the educational sciences clearly shows the evolution of many research careers in education and training centres.

With the creation of teacher training centres after 1956 – including the *Ecoles Normales Supérieures (ENS)* in 1963, the "Centres Educatifs de l'Enseignement Secondaire" in 1958, the Centre de Formation des Inspecteurs in 1969, the Centres Pédagogiques Régionaux in 1970, the Ecole Supérieure des Sciences de l'Education in 1983, and the Centre d'Orientation et de Planification in 1987 - the scientific practice in the field of educational sciences was institutionalised within the framework of a practical, procedural and formative character. It aimed to ensure the training of human resources and other personnel in the education and training sector. The field of educational sciences in Morocco was becoming a multidisciplinary field of

human and social sciences. Thus, the presence of the sociology of education was limited to providing theoretical training and producing pedagogical research on the transformations of school organisation and the professional practice of the various actors in the system (teachers, education administrators, inspectors, guidance counsellors and so on).

Given the weakness of a sociological scientific group within these training institutions and the lack of mutual interaction with scientific groups in universities and research centres, the role of sociologists and researchers was limited to providing training about the history of sociological theories on education during the classical and modern period; the focus was rarely on new theories and the context of the development of school sociology. Accordingly, the epistemological establishment of the field was the product of individual efforts and collaborations with other researchers to liberate sociological practice from the legacy of educational science. After that, many efforts were made to create research teams and training groups to work on issues of education and school (e.g. the Ecoles Normales Supérieures of Meknes, Martel, Marrakech, Fez ... that later, in 2009, joined the universities).

Epistemologically, it is important to accentuate that the marginalisation experienced by anthropology in Morocco and the Arab region contributed to the “usurpation of an anthropologist's profile that has become almost fashionable ... by researchers from other fields of knowledge such as literature, popular culture, political science, and history” (Boubrik, 2019: 188). Historically, the practice of the sociology of education during the colonial period also resulted in 'an accumulation of writings and a mutual dependence between writers to formulate facts, attitudes, [and] reproduce descriptive discourses' (Faoubar, 2016: 86). The result was 'the failure and isolation of these writings from the development of the field of sociology and social sciences in the twentieth century [so that] they remained closed to transcendent concepts, and functional theses' (Ibid.). The sociology of education experienced the same situation in the training centres. There was thus a deep crisis of epistemological identity, an uncertain future of scientific practice and the relationship with the university.

In recent years, literature and guidebooks related to the sociology of education or schooling have been published and written by researchers in the educational sciences, and sometimes in the discipline of arts and languages, that lack conceptual, epistemological, and critical coherence in dealing with sociological theories. This creates confusion among students and researchers

who interact with research that is not produced by specialists in the field. It also leads to the possibility of turning educational publications into a business (especially with commercial books), not to mention the "threat" of usurping the profile of a sociologist.

Many of these publications do not allow for the linking of epistemological and methodological bases to create a critical debate between local scientific communities. The lack of specialisation leads to “a relative weakness of theoretical research and a lack of research that extracts new concepts from these grand theories and their critique to submit them to empirical research in the field” (Hammoudi, 2018: 39-40). Furthermore, some colleges and training centres (the *École supérieure des sciences de l'éducation* and the ENS in particular) offer master's and doctoral degrees after a basic or professional degree in education sciences or related specialties. All this can pose a real problem for the academic future of students and researchers, especially as degrees in the sociology of education can be obtained outside the faculties of Arts and Humanities. This situation is further complicated when laboratories and research groups in the arts and languages award higher degrees related to the field of sociology of education.

Whether it is the process of university professionalisation or the philosophy of containing so many disciplines due to the weak institutionalisation of specialisation, the crisis of the epistemological identity of the field of sociology of education is surely transferred from training centres to the university, as is already the case with the fields of anthropology and popular culture in Morocco (El Idrissi, 2020). It is clear that the interconnection of the development of sociological practice in Morocco with rural and women's issues has contributed to the marginalisation of the educational question for decades and has made it a secondary variable in the work of the leaders of Moroccan sociology. This marginalisation is reflected in the adoption of the sociology of education by training centres and its incorporation in the field of educational sciences.

### **Challenges of scientific practice and the university's institutionalisation of the sociology of education**

The real process of sociological research on education and school issues was launched in the 1990s. However, it is still a marginal specialisation at the Moroccan university, and individual efforts alone cannot ensure an institutionalisation of the sociology of education. To develop a scientific practice around the school and to unite the scientific and political

efforts of different actors to accompany the changes in the Moroccan school in the digital age, it is necessary to confront the processes of commodification of society and in educational activities (Burawoy, 2015). Analysis of the centrality of the school in the production of social and spatial inequalities in the context of a transformed society is vital.

Though political and economic interest in sociology is selective, its use in educational training and research centres contributes to rethinking the relationship between political engagement and scientific research; its use can make critique multidimensional – open to political demand and able to contribute to public debate and general reform. Indeed, the emphasis on centralising the accumulation of knowledge of sociological research on education has made the objective of establishing analytical frameworks compatible with the nature of Moroccan society as a developing society. However, this does not eliminate "the importance of the utilitarian dimension of scientific knowledge provided that it has the necessary awareness of the complementary and interactive argument between theory and concrete practice" (Muhsin, 1999: 8).

The process of privatisation and professionalisation (that is, the professionalisation of the careers of high school students and linking education to the labour market) extends to the Moroccan education system, which depends on the French model. The political actor is thus no longer the only actor of change as soon as educational reforms become compatible with the objectives of donors and the philosophy of the market. It is, therefore, necessary to mention the philosophy of Pascon in the institutionalisation of a sociological practice that is open to political and economic actors who can build an accumulation of knowledge to ensure the future of multidimensional sociological criticism and to allow sociologists to participate in reforms and gain social legitimacy after decades of marginalisation.

Alongside the critique of the educational system and educational policies in Morocco (in terms of political and economic dependence), sociological research on the university also developed when youth and values were studied (Bourqia, El Harras & Bensaïd, 1995). This is an extension of the investigative studies model (Bourqia, El Ayadi, El Harras & Rachik, 2000) that characterised the practice of sociology in Morocco in the 1980s. This research "intermingles" sociological and anthropological approaches and refers to the field as the basic system of sociological practice. Also, the richness and diversity of research techniques and approaches show the real evolution of sociological practice in Morocco. However, it "focuses mainly

on students, while the university as an organisation and the teaching profession remain largely absent and do not constitute an object of research in the field of the sociology of organisations, the sociology of the profession" (Bourqia, 2009: 12). Indeed, in addition to focusing on young people, this research aims to monitor the issue of values and social change in Morocco (Bourqia et al. 2010). Consequently, Such studies contribute to the broadening of the intervention of the sociology of education to include multiple issues (youth, university, values) as well as sensitive issues (religion, gender). They also pave the way for interdisciplinarity and the establishment of a dialogue between the "social sciences".

Over the last three decades, the practice of the sociology of education has maintained its link with economic, political, and institutional demand. However, this time the linkage is focused on specific issues, especially political and economic issues, that raise many questions about the relationship between sociological practice and the general system of the capitalisation and liberalisation of the world. The dependence on experience has a great impact on the weak institutionalisation of sociological practice in Morocco which "makes its themes go hand in hand with specific criteria rather than having a research strategy" (Zahi, 2014: 189). The concentration on the sociology of education in training centres has highlighted the evolution of the training system in these centres (Chekroun, 1989). The first of these studies is part of the sociology of the professions, which is interested in the training system accompanying the establishment of the CPRs (*centres pédagogiques régionaux*) [...] and which accordingly analyses the social status of teachers and their academic career in relation to values (Rachik, 2007: 23). When it comes to a sociological evaluation of central educational reforms that are linked to the strengthening of human resources, much attention is paid to the evaluation of training institutions and their impact on the construction of personal projects and the conditions for the construction of the professional and social experience of teachers and educational actors. The teacher training system has been analysed through two approaches: firstly, the principle of centralisation and its dependence on the international system through the 'generalisation of training'; and secondly, the development of professionalisation strategies" (Lahchimi, 2015: 23) in relation to the objective of improving educational provision.

During the 1990s, the training of educational actors was confined to the training institutions of the Ministry of National Education in almost total separation from the university. Thus, these institutions are considered

professional organisations rather than fields of production and organisation of knowledge (compared to universities). The mission of the university is to provide basic training before entering the training centres. Universities contribute to the process of professionalisation of education since the adoption of "*Professional Licences*" to link knowledge to the labour market and the professionalisation of academic training in a more technical and economic direction.

After analysing schools in rural areas, the schooling of girls and the critique of educational policies, attention is turned to issues related to school guidance and guidance professions in Morocco. The interest in the sociology of school guidance came from the educational sciences in parallel with the interest of political actors in school guidance issues since the 1990s.

The contribution of the school guidance process to the production of social inequalities and inequalities in educational achievement (Boulahecn, 2002), has been the subject of much attention during this period. It also analyses counselling practices, school guidance and the conditions of production of the professional experience of counsellors in Morocco (Boulahecn, 2005).

Indeed, by limiting its effectiveness in institutions, marginalising the different actors in its production and linking it to bureaucratic procedures that are associated with market requirements, school guidance becomes an 'institutional weapon in the hands of the Moroccan education system to legalise the lack of equal opportunities that is reflected in the so-called compulsory education (up to the age of 15) at the end of the preparatory stage [...] The institutional mechanisms allow all disadvantaged pupils to settle for the status inherited from their social group' (Boulahecn, 2005: 32). From an epistemological point of view, the critical spirit that has taken hold since the emergence of sociology in Morocco preserves analysis the interweaving of the economy and politics in the production of educational activities.

The institutionalisation of sociological practice during the 1990s is marked by the use of Arabic and French as languages of publication and scientific research, unlike the pioneer period when French dominated most sociological productions. This has allowed an increase in the number of local researchers due to the development of the Arabisation of sociology in Morocco. Over the last two decades, the sociology of education in Morocco has sought to go beyond the secondary position of education and the school in the work of the pioneer generation and the founding fathers by adopting critical multidimensional approaches. It attempts to dismantle the

manifestations of the crisis in the Moroccan education system and to participate in reforms that move away from the philosophy of dependency and take into consideration local specificities. Emerging issues have been highlighted such as educational policies, curricula, programs, and school guidance, which are revived by new approaches even outside the practice of the sociology of education while maintaining a consensual dependence between social and political demand, effective critique, and macro and micro-sociological approaches. Issues of social inequality, school accessibility, school integration and school success remain the central pillars that organise the different sociological works produced during this period. Initially, much work was done to develop a sociological practice far removed from the pedagogical philosophy of educational sciences and to link the sociology of education to universities and institutions. Still, after several years of work and the increase in the number of researchers, many research attempts have been made to shed light on the school experience and to follow the process of production of social and educational inequalities in Moroccan schools in relation to gender and gender differences.

### **Conclusion**

Enrolling students in MA and PhD degrees in the sociology of education is a turning point in the institutionalisation of a sociology that attends to issues of education and schooling in universities rather than to the needs of training centres as has been the case for decades. The sociology of education is no longer a university module that is taught as part of the Bachelor of Arts - or Professional - degree and is represented to students as a set of theories and knowledge to gain access to teacher training centres; it has become a main branch at the university. Many researchers strive to make the correspondence between teaching and learning and training and to produce sociological knowledge about the Moroccan school and the development of scientific practice. To this end, sociology has not only "penetrated new problems and questions" but is creating important accumulations of knowledge through personal efforts to develop sociology in Morocco in general, and the sociology of education in particular.

On this basis, attention is given to issues such as school violence, in a micro-perspective (especially in urban areas) (Yaqine, 2013), social, school and gender inequalities (Boukhriss, 2018), the issue of empowerment (Žvan Elliott, 2015), school curricula and the environment (Herhar, 2018) and value issues (Jarmouni, 2018), educational policies and gender (Boukhriss, 2018),



school guidance and guidance professions (Boulehcen, 2005, 2006) and the crisis of educational systems and the question of reform (Jarmouni, 2017). Such studies work with innovative approaches that combine theoretical, field, and anthropological dimensions. They maintain the interconnection between scientific engagement and sociological knowledge that is of paramount importance for the development of society.

In the last decade, despite the weak institutionalisation and accumulation of knowledge production, school and schooling-related micro-issues have become the basis of knowledge production in the sociology of education (compared to rural and women's issues). Indeed, thanks to individual and collective initiatives, school issues are linked to academic research and the latest international sociological theories and approaches in the field. Thus, a genuine Moroccan sociological practice of education has started to develop.

### References

- Boubrik B. (2019), *Anthropology: Theories and experiences*, Casablanca, East Africa (in Arabic).
- Bouderbala N. (1984), *Pour un regard froid sur la colonisation. La perception de la colonisation dans le champ de la pensée décolonisée, le cas du Maroc*, in Vatin J.C., (ed.), *Connaissances du Maghreb, sciences sociales et colonisation*, Paris, CNRS, pp. 423-434.
- Boudon R (1973), *L'inégalité des chances*, Paris, Armand Colin.
- Boukhriss F (2018), *Sociology of education and gender: From social inequalities to gender disparities*, Omran journal, issue 25, pp. 145-157. (in Arabic).
- Boukhriss F. (2018), *Politique éducative et genre: Une approche théorique de l'expérience marocaine*, In Boukhriss F. & Herhar A., (eds.), *Questions de sociologie de l'éducation: genre, environnement et valeurs*, Rabat, Net, pp. 27-41 (in Arabic).
- Boulehcen A. (2002), *Sociologie de l'Éducation. Les systèmes éducatifs en France et au Maroc. Étude comparative*. Casablanca: Afrique-Orient, Casablanca.
- Boulehcen A. (2005), "Le processus d'orientation scolaire au Maroc", *Revue internationale d'éducation de Sèvres*, issue 38, pp. 25-34.

- Boulahcen A. (2006), *Sociologie de l'orientation: étude des processus scolaires et professionnels en France et au Maroc: l'état de la recherche*, Rabat: Editions & Impressions Bouregreg communication,
- Bourdieu P. and Passeron J.C. (1964), *Les héritiers*, Paris, Minuit.
- Bourqia R. (2009), *Vers une sociologie de l'université marocaine*, revue Al-Madrassa Al-Maghribiya (Conseil Supérieur de L'Enseignement-Maroc), N° 2, pp. 11-55.
- Bourqia R. (2010), "Values and social change in Morocco", *Quaderns de la Mediterrània*, Issue 13, pp. 105-115.
- Bourqia R., El Ayadi M., El Harras M. & R. Hassan (2000), *Jeunes et valeurs religieuses*, Casablanca, Éditions Eddif.
- Bourqia R., El Harras M. and D. Bensaïd (1995), *Jeunesse estudiantine marocaine: valeurs et stratégies*, with the collaboration of Jamila Bennaghmouch, Rabat, Éditions de la Faculté des lettres et des sciences humaines.
- Burawoy, M. (2015). Facing an unequal world. *Current Sociology*, issue 63(1), pp. 5-34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392114564091>
- Chekroun M. (1989), *Culture et pédagogie au Maroc*, Casablanca, Toubkal.
- Dialmy A. (2015), *Sexual transition in Morocco: the right to sex, filiation and abortion*, Rabat, Dar al Aman (in Arabic).
- Dubet F and Martuccelli D (1996), *À l'école. sociologie de l'expérience scolaire*, Le Seuil, coll. "L'épreuve des faits", Paris.
- El Idrissi M. (2017), *Teaching Sociology in Morocco: Research Institutions and the Epistemological Institutionalization of Scientific Practice*, Arab Social Science Council, Working Paper Series No. 1, Beirut, Lebanon (in Arabic).  
[http://www.theacss.org/uploads/cke\\_documents/Teaching-Sociology-in-Morocco-Paper-Final-Ar.pdf](http://www.theacss.org/uploads/cke_documents/Teaching-Sociology-in-Morocco-Paper-Final-Ar.pdf)
- El Idrissi M. (2020), *Teaching Folk culture in the Moroccan university: research, training, and the bet of institutionalizing the epistemological identity*, *Revue al-Mourooth*, numéro 18, pp.154-177 (in Arabic)
- Elliott, K. (2015). (Dis)Empowering Education: The Case of Morocco. *Urban Anthropology and Cultural Systems Studies and Global Economic Development*, Issue 44(1/2), pp. 1-42.
- El-Maliki A. (2011), "Moroccan Sociology: Epistemological Preliminaries". In *Readings in Methodology: African Perspectives*,

- edited by Jean-Bernard Ouédraogo and Carlos Cardoso. Dakar: Codesria (Codesria Book Series), pp. 127- 138.
- Faoubar M. (2016), Sociology of colonial knowledge production: education in Morocco, *Omran journal*, issue 17, pp. 67-90 (in Arabic).
- Felk A (1992), "Société civile et espace scolaire: de l'espace scolaire comme espace d'autorité", *Signes du présent*, N. hors-série, pp. 285-295.
- Hammoudi A. (2018), *Social Sciences in the Arab Region: An Approach to Arabic Language Productions (2000-2016)*, Arab Council for Social Sciences, Report No. 2, Beirut, Lebanon, (in Arabic).  
[http://www.theacss.org/uploads/cke\\_documents/Arab-Social-Science-Report-2017-Ar.pdf](http://www.theacss.org/uploads/cke_documents/Arab-Social-Science-Report-2017-Ar.pdf)
- Herhar A. (2017), La culture environnementale dans les programmes scolaires au Maroc, in Maamri L. & Kanbaai A., (eds.), *territoire, société et développement durable*, Fez, USMBA, pp. 165-190 (in Arabic).
- Herhar A. (2018), Manifestations of environmental awareness among qualifying secondary school students: A study in environmental sociology, In Boukhriss F. & Herhar A., (eds.), *Questions de sociologie de l'éducation: genre, environnement et valeurs*, Rabat, Net, pp. 149-176 (in Arabic).
- Jarmouni R. (2018), La question de la valeur dans les programmes et curricula de l'école marocaine: Questions et observations, In Boukhriss F. & Herhar A., (eds.), *Questions de sociologie de l'éducation: genre, environnement et valeurs*, Rabat, Net, pp. 107-121 (in Arabic).
- Khatibi A. (1975), "Sociologie du monde arabe: Positions", *BESM* (126), pp. 13-26.
- Lahchimi M. (2015) 'La réforme de la formation des enseignants au Maroc', *Revue internationale d'éducation de Sèvres*, issue 69, pp. 21-26.
- Madoui, M. (2015). Moroccan sociology: from denial to rehabilitation. *Sociologies pratiques*, issue 30(1), pp. 99-113. doi:10.3917/sopr.030.0099.
- Mernissi F. (1987), "Préface", in Belarbi A., *Portraits de femmes*, Casablanca, Éditions le Fennec, Collection Approches. DOI: 10.1097/00004311-198305000-00002
- Muhsin M. (1990), *The general sociological framework of the education system*, Rabat, Majallat 'Ālam al-Tarbiyah (in Arabic).

- Muhsin M. (1993), *Savoir et Institution: Contribution à l'analyse sociologique du discours philosophique de l'école au Maroc*, Beirut, Dar Attalia (in Arabic).
- Muhsin M. (1999), *The Discourse of Educational Reform between the Issues of Crisis and the Challenges of Civilization Transformation: A Critical Sociological Look*, Casablanca-Beirut, Al-Markaz Al-Thaqafi Al Arabi (in Arabic).
- Pascon P. & M. Bentahar (1978 [1969]), "Ce que disent 296 jeunes ruraux", in *Études sociologiques sur le Maroc: recueil d'articles conceived and prepared by Abdelkébir Khatibi*, Tangiers, Éditions marocaines et internationales, pp. 145-287.
- Pascon P. (1986a), *L'ensemence des modèles et l'absence d'innovation*, Interviewed by Zakia Daoud, translated into Arabic by Mustapha el Hasnaoui, *Revue Bayt Al-Hikma*, Numéro 3, pp.3-30. (in Arabic).
- Pascon P. (1986b), *En sociologie rurale*, Interviewed by Tahar ben Jelloun, Translated into Arabic by Mohamed Boulaich, *Revue Bayt Al-Hikma*, Numéro 3, pp. 31-52. (in Arabic).
- Pascon P. (1986c) [1979], "La sociologie, pourquoi faire ?" in Pascon P., *Trente ans de sociologie au Maroc (textes anciens et inédits)*, Rabat, *Bulletin économique et social du Maroc*, (155-156), pp. 59-70.
- Rachik H. and Bourqia R. (2011), "La sociologie au Maroc: grandes étapes et jalons thématiques", *SociologieS* [Online], <http://sociologies.revues.org/3719>.
- Rachik H. (2007), *Sociologie, Anthropologie & Science politique au Maroc, Jalons thématiques et institutionnels, 1959-2006*, Rabat, Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, Direction des Sciences.
- Radi A. (1969) "Processus de socialisation de l'enfant marocain", *Revue des études philosophiques et littéraires*, Rabat, April, pp. 33-47.
- Roussillon, A. (2003). *Sociology in Egypt and Morocco*. In Porter T. & Ross D. (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of Science*, pp. 450-465. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CHOL9780521594424.026
- Tozy M. (2013), "Paul Pascon, un pionnier de la sociologie marocaine", *SociologieS* (online), <http://sociologies.revues.org/4322>.
- Yaqine M. (2018), *Violence in the school environment from a micro-sociological perspective*, *Al Baht Al'Ilmi Journal*, Issue 54, Pp. 53-78 (In Arabic).

- Young F. D. M (1971), *Knowledge and control: new directions for the sociology of education*. London: Collier-Macmillan.
- Zahi K. (2014), The practice of sociology in Morocco: institutional evolution and new challenges. *Practical Sociologies*, hs 1(3), pp. 183-192. doi:10.3917/sopr.hs01.0183.
- Zouggari A. (1991), "Stratégie des agriculteurs en matière d'éducation", in Zouggari A and Vignet-Zunz J, *Jbala: histoire et société: études sur le Maroc du Nord-ouest*, Paris: CNRS éditions, pp. 203-230.