A high-angle, wide-view photograph of a mountainous region. In the foreground, a steep, grassy hillside slopes down towards a deep valley. A river winds through the valley floor, surrounded by lush green vegetation. The middle ground is filled with a series of rugged, layered mountain ranges, their peaks and ridges creating a complex pattern of light and shadow. The background shows more distant, hazy mountain ranges under a bright blue sky filled with scattered white clouds. The overall scene conveys a sense of vastness and natural beauty.

Technology, Time, and Intangibles:

Freedom of Education and the relationship between the
cultural, economic, and political sphere

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MSc. Management of Technology

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economic, and political sphere

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Preface

This thesis has been a long journey of exploration into topics, literature, and worldviews that two years ago I wouldn't have thought existed. I am very thankful to Dr. Ro C. W. M. Naastepad for leading me into such a broad exploration which has contributed greatly to the development of my capacities and especially my worldview. All our conversations have been greatly interesting and engaging for me. A special thanks to Prof. Jill Slinger for being open and flexible on the approach to this thesis and especially for caring about more than just the outcomes of the thesis. Your words were a support to me and led me to value more the time and effort I have put in this thesis.

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Executive Summary

With new potential technologies, there is an increase (and ever returning) discussion on the competition between humans and machines in the labour-force mainly in the expectation that humans will lose from it. However, is technology only a competitor or are we missing another concrete role of technology in human welfare. This thesis aims to take a step back and discuss how technology has been connected to welfare. It leads to a perspective of the economy in which human flourishing actually depends on the evolution of technology. The issue is not the creation of technology per se, the issue are the institutions that govern it and the distribution of its benefit.

The core of the thesis starts with the concept of capital to understand the connection between technology and welfare. Neoclassical economics (NCE) provided a concept of capital that narrows the role of human capacities in it, and with it, the aims individuals will have (i.e., a focus on consumers rather than valuing the development of human capacities). The NCE conception of capital was criticized as it doesn't represent how capital works in the real world and how it relates with human beings. The missing connection between capital and human beings is that human capacities are fundamental for capital to be productive. Karl Marx's *Fragment on Machines* ([1858] 1973) provides a broader conception of capital which is embodied on what the thesis calls the *Capital Cycle*. In this cycle, human capacities (intangible capital) are embodied into machines (physical capital) which leads to the opportunity of productivity growth which can lead to the creation of disposable time (freed capital) by reducing 'necessary labour'. The *Fragment on Machines* see this interaction as an opportunity for human beings, and societies at large, to focus on the *free development of capacities* as a new source of wealth rather than the maximization of labour for the maximization of economic output.

However, why the *free* development of capacities? Philosophers and thinkers such as Aristotle, Paulo Freire, and Amartya Sen have argued that human beings need more than only consumption and should strive for "higher freedoms". Human capacities are not only useful, but they also have value by themselves. Specifically, Aristotle proposes that for a human being to obtain *Eudaimonia* (translated as *human flourishing*) they need to develop their human capacities as to obtain virtue. The development of these virtues can be seen as another form of freedom, namely *positive freedom*. However, for them to develop their capacities they need negative freedom which is the absence of obstacles to their will. The importance of negative freedom is not for the sake of doing whatever one wants but for the potential development of positive freedom. The perspective of positive freedom as a fundamental freedom contrast to that of freedom in the Enlightenment. Enlightenment freedom embodies the idea that humans need to be forced into ideals that are deemed universal and rational to be truly free. This is a violation of the needed negative freedom which is necessary for human flourishing.

As negative freedom is essential for the development of capacities, it extends that negative freedom of education is also essential. Education systems, and thus the cultural sphere, need negative freedom for people to have the potential to develop positive freedoms in individuals. Freedom of education requires that the other spheres of society have a different type of freedom. The economic sphere, where freed capital is created, requires positive freedom to provide the needed resources to the cultural sphere. The political sphere, as is the sphere of laws, may use its Enlightenment freedom to secure the funding of the economic sphere but

never to infringe on the negative freedom of the cultural sphere. Freedom of education can be achieved through this allocation of freedom in the spheres.

How is the relationship between the social spheres in the modern history of educational reforms? Do societies channel freed capital for the purpose of human flourishing of its members? The thesis focuses on two periods of educational reforms: (1) the late 18th century until early 20th century and (2) mid-20th century until 21st century in the United States of America (U.S.) and the Netherlands. The first period presents the rise of Enlightenment freedom from the political sphere infringing the negative freedom of the cultural sphere. This leads to a struggle in both countries to the de-establishment or the acceptance of diverse worldviews in education. In the Netherlands, after the introduction of government-controlled and general education, it presents the Dutch School Struggle which ends in 1917 and is defended as a victory for freedom of education. In the U.S., imposition of the political sphere over education was clear. Until today, the government-controlled education system in the U.S. (also referred as the common school system) is the dominant one. The clear victory of this period was the political sphere. It was given the role as the “educator” of society and with it the power to define the aims of education and how it is measured. The Dutch School Struggle was victorious only to the extent that forced the government to accept to fund different worldviews on education (based on religion and pedagogy). However, the frame was clear, the government was to be “concerned” about education. The Dutch government continued to take the role as the educator of society. This is a clear misallocation of the freedoms in the social spheres because the political sphere uses its Enlightenment freedom to infringe the negative freedom of the cultural sphere and impose positive freedom as for the purpose of the state.

The second period is characterized by the neoliberal educational reforms. The shift comes from the desire to establish the aim of the cultural sphere as to serve the economic sphere. Characteristic about these educational reforms is that they propose higher school “autonomy” with higher accountability from the government. For freedom of education, how is it possible to be autonomous while being accountable to an external actor? It is not possible. This neoliberal frame of autonomy is a reduced autonomy that mainly aims to provide organizational autonomy. Educational autonomy, the autonomy necessary to define the purpose of education and how it is to be met, is still in the hands of the political sphere. Nonetheless, there is a new sphere that enters in the definition of education. Powerful actors in the economic sphere are able to influence the political sphere through a para-political sphere (composed of, for example, philanthropic organizations). The para-political sphere takes advantage of the role of the state as educator to influence the type of education to which they deem valuable. The introduction of the para-political sphere and neoliberal reforms leads to a web of accountability of the schools which clearly neglects freedom of education for the teachers and the students. Freedom of education is for the teachers (by creating curriculums) and the students (by selecting from the available curriculums), not the freedom of a rich actor to define the education of others. This web of accountability, new governance strategies, and entrance of more actors that want to frame education to their benefit hinders freedom of education. It is argued that is not enough to have a mode of funding education, such as a voucher system, that provides funds to students on an equal basis for the school they desire to safeguard freedom of education. Freedom of education also requires safeguards from influences of the economic and para-political sphere. Safeguards that the political sphere can apply as to provide the right of freedom of education and not only the right to education.

What would be an education system that would safeguard freedom of education? Freedom of education require complete educational autonomy for the teachers to create their own

curriculums and the opportunity for students to be funded regardless of the curriculum they choose. This even includes that groups of teachers, who align in curricular views, are able to define the curriculum of how their teachers are to be educated. Compared to other proposed funding systems of education that are framed to support freedom of education, the voucher system is seen as an ideal mode of funding only if educational autonomy is respected. Such a system is called in the thesis as a *culturally autonomous education system*. Moreover, based on the review of literature on the neoliberal voucher system, issues that have appeared in its implementation are discussed through the frame of freedom of education to propose conditions that would avoid them if possible. The work of the thesis results in a proposal of 7 core conditions (an extended list is presented in Chapter 5 Section 4) for an education system that has the potential to safeguard freedom of education:

1. Freedom of education is a right.
2. Freed capital is collected and distributed via the state or an independent institution.
3. The collection of freed capital should be done by the highest level of sovereign political organization.
4. All schools are non-profit.
5. All donations by private organizations and individuals are to be collected in a single fund that would complement the fund from the tax-collected by the political sphere.
6. The student has the right to any education as long as they accept the curriculum of the school.
7. Teachers have the right to create and choose their own curriculum.

With a culturally autonomous voucher system, disposable time comes full circle as to provide the opportunity for the development of positive freedom. In this sense, the origins of the word School can truly be respected as it comes from the Greek word *schole* which relates to freed time to study and practice to people who had no claim to it according to the archaic order prevailing at the time (Masschelein and Maarten 2013). It allows for humans to flourish in the multitude of ways they see fit and allows them of the dignity to be an active subject of the processes that shape their world, their culture, their economy, their politics, and, in turn, use them for evermore flourishing for all.

1 Introduction

Since the First Industrial Revolution, there has been an increase in welfare and economic growth due to the possibilities created by new technologies. Nonetheless, according to various studies, technological advancement has also been associated with an increase in economic and social inequalities, and an unsustainable pressure on natural resources (Evangelista 2018). For example, the Third Industrial Revolution, also termed the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Revolution or Digital Revolution¹, seems to increase the problem of socioeconomic inequality due to a divergence between well-paid high-skill jobs and the replacement of middle-skill jobs with low-skill jobs (Schmitt 2012; Taniguchi and Yamada 2019).

The lack of connection between technological change, and the economic growth that it produces, and the general increase in welfare seems to be rooted in the orthodox notion of capital and its role in society. This conception of capital extends from a narrow perspective of human beings. In the thesis, the relationship between the economic process, which needs a broader conception of capital, and how welfare is defined is explored. This provides the basis for a society which reconnects technological change, and broadly the economy, to the welfare of society. For some philosophers, an essential aspect of human life, and fundamental to human welfare, is connected to their free development of capacities. However, it is argued that the large prioritization of certain values over others in education systems, as a result of working influences from elite members of society, diminishes the potential of people to freely develop their capacities and limits this essential aspect in their lives. Therefore, a central point of the thesis is how can technological change be connected to institutions that will allow all member of a society to truly live human lives outside of such elite influences. This is achievable through the creation and correct use of disposable time to provide freedom of education (the free development of capacities) to all members of a society. To explain whether a system that is able to achieve this objective, the main research question of the thesis is:

How can society safeguard the use of disposable time for the free development of capacities of individuals?

The core of the thesis is structured in 4 chapters. Each chapter has an introduction to the research question that it aims to address and its own conclusions. The main research question is answered through an analysis of four bodies of literature: (1) Marx's "Fragment on Machines" (Marx [1858] 1973); (2) a theoretical literature on three concepts of freedom; (3) a review of the empirical literature on the relationship between the funding and the control of education; and (4) a literature review on proposals for freedom of education. Each body of literature corresponds primarily to one of the chapters.

Chapter 2 introduces the economic and social concepts on which the other chapters are based on and aims to answer the research question: "*What is the relationship between disposable time and the development of capacities?*" and it analyses Marx's "Fragment on Machines". Chapter 3 dives deeper into why freedom and the development of capacities are connected,

¹ The Second Industrial Revolution is said to have occurred at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the twentieth century and is also called the Technological Revolution.

and the importance of freedom of education in human lives, by answering the question “*What does freedom means for the development of capacities?*”. Chapter 4 reviews educational reforms in the United States of America (U.S.) and the Netherlands so as to answer “*What are the implications for freedom of education of conventional modes of funding education?*”. Lastly from the core of the thesis, chapter 5 compiles all the conclusions from the previous chapters and expands on them through a literature review of education systems proposed for freedom of education and issues related to the voucher system. The chapter concludes with a proposal of a system that would safeguard freedom of education. The latter would answer the research question “*What mode of funding would support freedom of education?*” and the main research question. Ultimately, chapter 6 provides the conclusions and discussions of the thesis.

2 How is disposable time created?

“On the meaning and the functions of capital, volumes have been written, and, to judge by the economic journals, volumes are still being written and no doubt will continue to be written. Properly viewed, this is not a matter for regret, as it simply indicates that capital is one of the most far-reaching conceptions” (Nicholson 1903:41)

“When economists reach agreement on the theory of capital they will shortly reach agreement on everything else” (Bliss 1975:vii)

The aim of the chapter is to answer, “What is the relationship between disposable time and the development of capacities?”. Before directly answering this question, the chapter establishes connections between the definition of capital and the role of human capacities in Section 1 (Capital and Welfare). The latter explores this connection from two schools of economic thought: Neoclassical economics (NCE) and Austrian economics (AE). Even if AE perceives a more important role of human capacities than NCE, both views aligned on how they are value. This is due that capital is valued due to its effect in the production process, therefore, human capacities which are used for the production of capital (an event that seems to be missing in NCE as human are seen mainly as consumers) are valued in the same way. Section 2 (The Capital Cycle) discusses Marx’s *Fragment on Machines* as to expand the role and importance of human capacities in the production process and society in general. This leads to the Capital Cycle, and thus answering the sub-question “what is capital?”, which reflects the transformation of capital in three moments. It originates as intangible capital which is then embodied in physical capital. The creation of physical capital may lead to productivity growth which leads to the creation of disposable time and rise to another type of capital: *freed capital* (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019). Freed capital is related to Wilken’s concept of free capital (Wilken 1982) and it appears when labour is obviated and the money used to remunerate it appears as profit on the Income-Expense account of an organization (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019:118). Freed capital is the flip side of disposable time as the money-value representation of the latter. Freed capital can be used for the funding of development of capacities (answering the sub-question “What is the source of funding of the development of capacities?”). Lastly, section 3 (“The Capital Cycle and Society”) answers the sub-question “What is the relationship between capital, the ‘general intellect’, and the free development of capacities?”. The ‘general intellect’ is the social aspect of intangible capital. The section connects the capital cycle to the relationship of the social spheres. The capital cycle, through the creation of disposable time, allows for free development of capacities. Nonetheless, whether the development is free or unfree depends on the relationship between the social spheres especially regarding the mechanisms for the distribution of freed capital. A potential condition for a larger flow of freed capital to the cultural sphere for the free development of capacities can be done if the social aspect of intangible capital is increasingly recognized by society.

2.1 Capital and Welfare

According to the dominant perspective on the economy, Neoclassical economic theory (NCE), the core connection between capital and welfare is through the process of capital accumulation. The more capital is accumulated, the higher the quality of life in a society. According to NCE, capital accumulation occurs when an investment on an organization

creates profits; the company re-invest part of the profits and so on, capital becomes accumulated. As capital is considered by society as the ideal object of accumulation for welfare, its definition impacts what is defined as important for welfare. Therefore, it is relevant to ask what capital is? To answer this question, the chapter will explore and compare to perspectives on capital from NCE and the Austrian school of economic thought (AE). Critically, the comparison of these perspective of capital would lead to understand how its definition play a role in defining the importance of human capacities in welfare. Lastly, a broader definition of capital is provided inspired from Marx's *Fragment on Machines* (Marx [1858] 1973) and how it centres the development of human capacities at the centre of welfare of society.

One of the most critical discussions on what capital entails is called the “Cambridge Capital Controversy”. The controversy resulted from the AE's critique of NCE's assumption on the measurability and aggregability of capital. For NCE, the process of capital accumulation provides more welfare because it creates more utility through consumption. The more utility, the higher the welfare is in said society (Sen 1999:65). For NCE, it was critical to create a measurable quantity of the amount of capital employed in a society and to related to a measure of output of production which indicates the total utility in a society. The established relationship is clear in Solow's production function:

$$Y = F(K, N)$$

In which Y is the aggregate output of the economy and it is a function of K, the aggregate monetary value of capital, and N, the aggregate monetary value of labour (generally in terms of wages. Humans are reduced to only an input of production or as consumers in search of utility. This perspective is referred as *Homo Oeconomicus* (Dopfer 2005). With this limited perspective on the role of human, the process of capital accumulation for NCE focuses on profit-maximization and utility-maximising consumers. With this view of human motivations, the definition of capital around the 20th century, coupled with the desire for a more “scientific” definition, was as a “stock (of wealth or property, o the value of either) existing at an instant of time” (Fisher 1904:387). By referring capital as a “stock” is to indicate that it produces something else (Hart and Sperling 1987), namely, goods (economic values) or profits. These profits were to be re-invested in organization or activities with the highest potential return on investment.

In NCE, it is central that the value of the stock of capital therefore is related to the economic values (the economic output) it can create. However, it doesn't automatically that the existence or the ownership of a stock of wealth automatically creates economic values. Through this definition of stock, Fischer provides the opportunity to commensurate all the different machines, processes, technologies, etc. into a single measurement. This measurement would be the summation of the monetary values of each of the objects that would be included. This vision of capital has continued throughout the 20th century and the early 21st century on the discussion the importance of different types of capitals such as *Intangible Capital* (Corrado, Hulten, and Sichel 2005), *Intellectual Capital* (Chen and Zhu 2004), or *Cultural Capital and Social Capital* (Bourdieu 1986). Capital, under this expansion, does take the form of “any factor of production that can be appropriated (i.e., it can become property) and carries expectations of generating financial returns” (Corrado et al. 2017, 2005). Moreover, it became so generalizable that the concept of “wealth” has expanded to included human qualities such as “knowledge” (even though it still needs a physical representation in a patent for them to become property and be counted as capital). In some way, NCE is starting to acknowledge the “intangible” side of production. Nonetheless, the

relationship between this intangible side and welfare is the same as that of the “tangible” or physical in capital accumulation. This “intangible” side is to be accumulated for the sake of the creation of more economic values leading human capacities to be valued for the sake of economic production. This perspective of capital will be referred as the “legal-financial” perspective.

AE’s perspective presented a clear role of the entrepreneur and its importance from their initial conception. They understood that the same physical structure of capital could have different valuation if organized in a different manner (Lewin and Cachanosky 2019). Bohm-Bawerk (Lewin and Cachanosky 2019), an AE economist, intended to relate this relationship on the decision of the entrepreneur on how much complexity could add, in time measures, before it would cost too much to increase the quality in the production of commodities. Even though Bohm-Bawerk was not successful to embody this relationship in an equation², it centres the role of human capacities in the economic process as (1) economic growth depends on the changes over time of the capital structure and the speed of this change and (2) this changes depend on the role of the entrepreneur (their capacities). AE thus understands that capital, in its tangible representation, requires something outside of itself to be valuable or to create economic values which they referred as “ideas” (Baetjer and Lewin 2007). Nonetheless, the value of the capital structure, and thus the value of the capacities of the entrepreneur, still depends on the monetary value of the commodities and services it produces (Lewin and Cachanosky 2019). Consequently, AE and NCE share the legal-financial perspective. Critically, this is a core characteristic of many types of capital that have been defined as can be seen in Table 1.

The core problem of the legal-financial perspective is that it hides or neglects the extent to which intangible capital itself (and capital more broadly) depends on human capacities and abilities, and on the time, efforts, and money required to acquire them, thus disregarding the vital importance of funding for the development of human capacities. Moreover, it excludes the opportunity that the development of intangible capital can be a valuable activity in human lives. With this limited understanding on how capital works, it is understandable how an orthodox conception of intangible capital can lead to undesirable social outcomes. A better view of capital would expand from the legal-financial perspective but establish a concrete role for human capacities and their importance. The next section aims to expand the perspective of capital in this direction.

2.2 The Capital Cycle

2.2.1 Intangible and Physical Capital

The first step is to define intangible capital in a way that clearly embodies the importance of human capacities in its intangible form. The legal-financial perspective limits capital mainly to its physical and financial forms. It requires a physical presence for appropriation (such as a patent, copyright, or the need of hardware to run software). Even if the expression of intangible capital is through the individual, who owns it or obtain the economic gains from this expression depend on our social institutions. An initial point to how intangible capital is independent from tangible capital (hereon physical capital) and how they are related is a great analogy by Baetjer and Lewin (2007):

² Even if not directly related to AE, there has been recent development in the measure of the “complexity” of the economy (Gala, Lopes Rocha, and Magacho 2018). A higher complexity has been related to higher production output (Lee and Vu 2020). The complexity of the economy can be seen as the “capital structure” to which AE refers.

“The point here is more radical than simply that capital goods have knowledge in them. It is rather that capital goods are knowledge, knowledge in the peculiar state of being embodied in a form ready-to-hand for use in production. The knowledge-aspect of capital goods is the fundamental aspect. Any physical aspect is incidental. A hammer, for instance, is physical wood (the handle) and minerals (the head). But a piece of oak and a chunk of iron do not make a hammer. The hammer is those raw material infused with the knowledge embodied in the precise shape of the head and handle, the curvature of the striking surface, the proportion of head weight to handle length, and so on. (We leave aside, for now, all the additional knowledge required to shape the oak into a handle and the iron into a steel head.) Even with a tool as bluntly physical as a hammer, the knowledge component is of overwhelming importance. With the precision tools such as microscopes and calibration instruments, the knowledge aspect of the tool becomes more dominant still. We might say, imprecisely but helpfully, that there is a greater proportion of knowledge to physical stuff in a microscope than in a hammer.”

Even the simplest of tools require human capacities for their manifestation as capital. Even more, as AE argued, they can have even more value as capital if new human capacities are created that change the way this same set of capital is used. Therefore, intangible capital becomes the base of all other forms of capital. This characteristic has been discussed in different manners, and there have been different references to what is the intangible aspect of an economy. Intangible capital may refer to “instructions that let us combine limited physical resources in arrangements that are more valuable” (Romer 1992); ideas (Lewin 2005); inventive capabilities (Suarez-Villa 2000); the process of choice-makers exploring possibilities, identifying necessities, and exploiting opportunities when possibilities meet necessities (Chaharbaghi and Cripps 2006); or human capacities and abilities (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019). From these perspectives, *intangible capital* refers to ideas, imagination, in brief, to all human capacities that organize capital and labour (the use of skills).

A classical economist that saw the relationship between the ‘intangible’ and the ‘tangible’ in the economy is Karl Marx as seen in his *The Fragment on Machines* (Marx [1858] 1973; referred hereon as *Fragment*). The *Fragment* is a clear example on how the intangible aspect of capital, the intellectual core of humans, is related and the core of the production of commodities in the industrial revolution. The aim to discuss the *Fragment* is to show from Marx’s observations (1) the intrinsic relationship between intangible capital and physical capital; (2) how this interaction creates *disposable time*; (3) how *disposable time* when used for the *free development of capacities* can be seen as a new type of wealth, hence, it opens the possibility of a notion of welfare centred in human capacities; (4) and how the distribution of *disposable time* is a point of struggle in society and a clear factor in determining whose human capacities are developed. It is critical to understand that in the *Fragment* the struggle of distribution of disposable time is phrased between labour and capitalist, and that the *Fragment* is phrased in manner that indicates the use of the Labour Theory of Value (LTV)³.

A clear point to begin the discussion of the *Fragment* is Marx’s view of capital. Capital becomes a transformation or embodiment of intangible capital as physical capital (or fixed capital as he called it), that is, machines are: “*organs of the human brain, created by the human hand; the power of knowledge, objectified*” (Marx [1858] 1973:706; emphasis in

³ The Labour Theory of Value states that labour is the origin of value of all commodities. Therefore, when commodities are exchanged, what is really exchanged is accumulated labour time since this is the common measure of all commodity production.

original). This centres the importance of intangible capital in the economy. The relationship between intangible capital and physical capital starts early in the *Fragment*:

“The accumulation of knowledge and of skill, of the general productive forces of the social brain, is thus absorbed into capital, as opposed to labour, and hence appears as an attribute of capital, and more specifically of fixed capital, in so far as it enters into the production process as a means of production proper” (Marx [1857] 1973:694)

“Further, in so far as machinery develops with the accumulation of society's science, of productive force generally, general social labour presents itself not in labour but in capital. The productive force of society is measured in fixed capital, exists there in its objective form; and, inversely, the productive force of capital grows with this general progress, which capital appropriates free of charge” (Marx [1857] 1973:694-695)

Intangible capital which arises from the human intellect and imagination, becomes accumulated in society, so it represents “the general productive forces of the social brain” and the “accumulation of society's science” and the basis of all physical capital. In the same quotes, the *Fragment* starts to indicate a point of contention that may occur due to the appropriation of intangible capital into physical capital: the change of its social characteristic to an individual one through ownership of physical capital. The *Fragment* indicates that what incentivises this process is the manner through which physical capital obtains its value:

“*Fixed capital*, in its character as means of production, whose most adequate form [is] machinery, produces value, i.e. increases the value of the product, in only two respects: (1) in so far as it *has* value; i.e. is itself the product of labour, a certain quantity of labour in objectified form; (2) in so far as it increases the relation of surplus labour to necessary labour, by enabling labour, through an increase of its productive power, to create a greater mass of the products required for the maintenance of living labour capacity in a shorter time.” (Marx [1857] 1973:706)

That is, a larger quantity of labour from that of the minimum required for the maintenance of labour. In current economic terms, the value of physical capital depends on how much *productivity growth* it can generate while maintaining to employ the same amount of labour. This nature of capital has led for wealth to be based on the “theft of alien labour time”, signalling to the appropriation of alien labour time:

“The theft of alien labour time, on which the present wealth is based, appears a miserable foundation in face of this new one, created by large-scale industry itself.” (Marx [1857] 1973:705)

The value of physical capital, for the capitalist, depends on not only creating productivity gains but creating *surplus labour* that it can appropriate. Nonetheless, Marx perceives the opportunity for the *emancipation of labour*:

“The first aspect is important, because capital here -- quite unintentionally -- reduces human labour, expenditure of energy, to a minimum. This will redound to the benefit of emancipated labour, and is the condition of its emancipation.” (Marx [1857] 1973:705)

When intangible capital is embodied in physical capital, it allows for the reduction of necessary labour time leading to *disposable time*:

“<The creation of a large quantity of disposable time apart from necessary labour time for society generally and each of its members (i.e. room for the development of the

individuals' full productive forces, hence those of society also), this creation of not-labour time appears in the stage of capital, as of all earlier ones, as not not-labour time, free time, for a few. What capital adds is that it increases the surplus labour time of the mass by all means of art and sciences, because its wealth consists directly in the appropriation of surplus labour time; since value directly its purpose, not use value. It is thus, despite itself, instrumental in creating the means of social disposable time, in order to reduce labour time for the whole society to a diminishing minimum, and thus to free everyone's time for their own development. But its tendency always, on the one side, to create disposable time, on the other, to convert it into surplus labour" (Marx [1857] 1973:708)

When disposable time is used for the free development of capacities, it provides an opportunity to change the "miserable foundations" of industrial wealth to one based in the "general powers of the human head":

"The surplus labour of the mass has ceased to be the condition for the development of general wealth, just as the non-labour of the few, for the development of the general powers of the human head." (Marx [1857] 1973:705)

With this new and generalized foundation for wealth, the aim of physical capital changes:

"The free development of individualities, and hence not the reduction of necessary labour time so as to posit surplus labour, but rather the general reduction of the necessary labour of society to a minimum, which then corresponds to the artistic, scientific etc. development of the individuals in the time set free, and with the means created, for all of them." (Marx [1857] 1973:706)

Physical capital is created as to allow for more disposable time for the "free development of individualities". For the *Fragment*, allowing for disposable time to be generally available for the free development of capacities allows for society:

"Once they have done so [the mass of workers appropriates their own surplus labour] - and disposable time thereby cease to have an antithetical existence - then, on one side, necessary labour time will be measured by the needs of the social individual, and, on the other, the development of the power of social production will grow so rapidly that, even though production is now calculated for the wealth of all, disposable time will grow for all." (Marx [1857] 1973:708)

Ultimately,

"Truly wealthy a nation when the working day is 6 hours rather than 12 hours. *Wealth* is not command over surplus labour time' (real wealth), 'but rather, *disposable time* outside that needed in direct production, for *every individual* and the whole society'"⁴ (Marx [1858] 1973:706)

The creation of *disposable time* through the embodiment of intangible capital into physical capital opens the possibility for the *free development of capacities* for society at large. However, it is clear that the lack of recognition of the social aspect of capital, embedded in

⁴ The source quoted by Marx is page 6 of *The Source and Remedy of the National Difficulties* from 1821. This was an anonymous pamphlet that was released in London in 1821 and entitled *The Source and Remedy of the National Difficulties, deduced from principles of political economy in a letter to Lord John Russell* (Marx [1857] 1973:835). A version of the reference (Marxist.org n.d.) does indicate to a similar idea but is not an exact quote as it is written in the *Fragment*.

the legal institutions of ownership of physical capital, is a barrier for this perspective of welfare based on this “new kind of wealth” and the generalized distribution of the latter.

2.2.2 Freed Capital

The last representation of capital to fully grasps the transformation or changes of capital in the production process is *freed capital* (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019). Freed capital appears when labour is obviated and the money used to remunerate it appears as profit on the Income-Expense account of an organization (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019:118). For Naastepad and Houghton Budd when “*Ideas and physical capital* bring about an economic dynamic that gives rise to *freed capital*” (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019:119). In the *Fragment*, when the “accumulation of society’s science” which arises from the “free development of individualities” is embodied in machines (physical capital, or fixed capital for Marx) may give rise to productivity growth and thus create disposable time. In this sense, Freed capital is the flip side of disposable time. Freed capital represents the money-value of the disposable time created through productivity growth. In line with the *Fragment*, the highest potential for the use of freed capital appears when a society uses it to provide funds for the free development of capacities.

The goal of disposable time for the free development of capacities, as the new foundation of wealth for society, requires freed capital to provide the necessary resources to individuals for said development⁵. However, as in the *Fragment* shows through the struggle of labour and capitalist, the distribution of the produced freed capital (in the economic sphere) for the development of capacities (the cultural sphere) depends on the legal-political setup of society (the political sphere⁶).

2.2.3 The Capital Cycle and Society

At this point, there can be a distinction of three moments of capital as represented in Figure 1 as the *capital cycle*. Capital in its moment as intangible capital, where it is born from human capacities and abilities, provides the basis for the economy to function and be organized, and is not directly transferable⁷. Physical capital which is born from intangible capital and enhance the productive capacity of society. Finally, freed capital is produced by the productivity growth due to the creation and introduction of physical capital.

Flow A is the flow of intangible capital into physical capital either to create more, find new uses, or re-organize it. All of the latter may enhance the productivity of the economic sphere which creates freed capital (Flow B). Ultimately, Flow C represents the funding to the cultural sphere of freed capital understood as the money-value representation of disposable time for the development of capacities. The capital cycle represented in Figure 1 is mirrored

⁵ If freed capital is framed only on its potential for the creation of disposable time (and its distribution), then it presents certain upper limits as every member of society has a limited lifetime from which “all of it” can be made disposable time. However, by framing freed capital as to provide *resources* for the free development of capacities, in which disposable time is included, then there is no upper limit.

⁶ The legal-political sphere relates to lawgiving and regulation (a task which, in a parliamentary democracy, is ascribed to the citizens’ representatives in parliament).

⁷ Knowledge can be shared. However, it requires work from at least two people for its transfer. Meanwhile, a commodity such as food only requires work from one person for production, and the other person in the exchange does not need to do more work than to consume it. Another example that conflicts are written instructions, however, these are written in a medium. In this process, it would become physical capital which is transferable.

by Figure 2 (In the next page) which aims to represent the content of the Fragment relevant to the production of disposable time.

The capital cycle expands the notion of capital from the legal-financial perspective through a broader overview of what is intangible capital and its social nature, and by representing the economic process through the transformation of capital. With the framework of the capital cycle, capital can take a more dominant role as “an enabler of human capacities and capabilities” (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019).

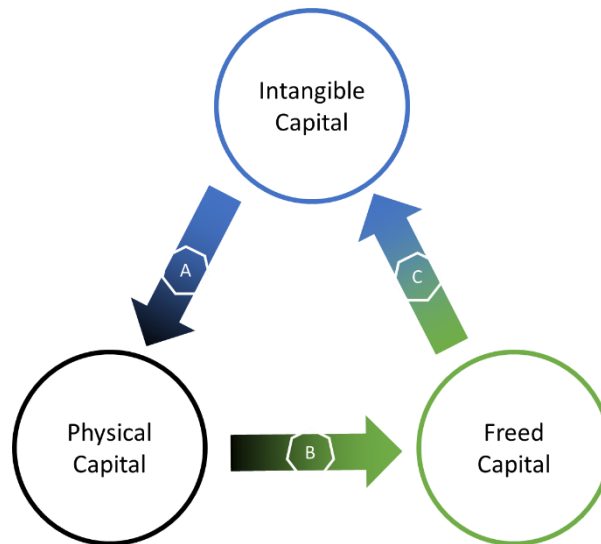


Figure 1. The relationship between the different forms of capital

A) Supply of knowledge, skills, creativity, ideas. B) Freed capital from productivity gains. C) Funding for cultural services such as education, research, and healthcare.

The capital cycle is also helpful to understand how different “spheres” of society (cultural, economic, and political) relate to each other. The cultural sphere is the producer of intangible capital and, therefore, the origin of the capital cycle. Intangible capital embodies not only the knowledge and ideas that arises from the interaction of individuals, but also our perspectives on what we need in life. Hence, intangible capital is at the centre of the cultural sphere. The cultural sphere thus provides the basis for the workings of the economic sphere.

The economic sphere represents our work and interactions with the focus to meet our material needs with ever more efficacy and efficiency. Through the support of the cultural sphere, it creates freed capital. At this moment, the political sphere provides the institutional setup as for the distribution of freed capital as funding for the cultural sphere and the mechanisms for its distribution. In turn, by creating these institutions, it can be said that society is able to establish the relationship between the social spheres. These mechanisms are the ones that will define whether the funding is either for the *free* or *unfree* development of capacities. Ideally, as the social origin of freed capital is more recognized (the creation of intangible capital is a through the individual interaction of members in a society), more freed capital can be redirected to the cultural sphere or to fulfil socially established needs rather than infinite individual wants. The next chapter aim to explore how the institutions and mechanisms that distribute freed capital to the cultural sphere relate to the relationship of the spheres and their freedoms.

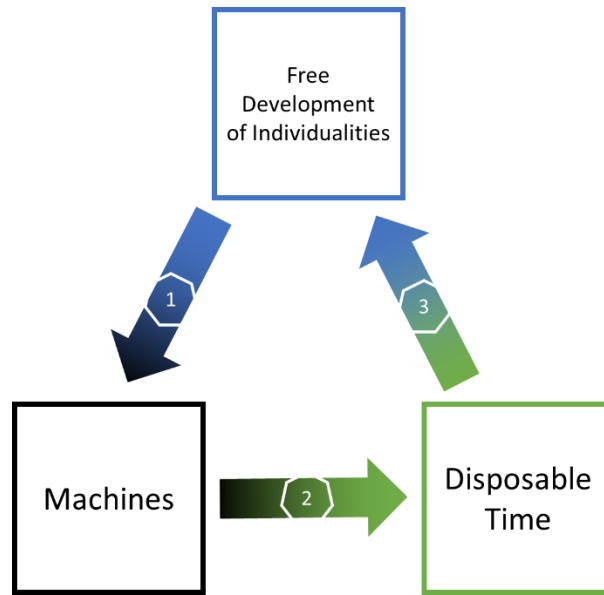


Figure 2. The production of disposable time in the Fragment.

1) The accumulated society's science becomes embodied in machines. 2) Machines reduce the amount of necessary labour thus creating disposable time. 3) Disposable time is given to people to freely develop their capacities.

2.3 Conclusions

The definition of capital has a clear relationship with how welfare and society is organized. The legal-financial perspective, which is the current dominant perspective, had a lack of recognition of the importance of human capacities in the economic process. A new perspective of capital is created through the discussion of Marx's *Fragment on Machines* which provides a starting point to fully form the capital cycle. In the capital cycle, the role of human capacities is clear and fundamental for the economic process and capital itself. Intangible capital is embodied in physical capital which is likely to produce freed capital. Freed capital, in turn, can be used as the source of funding of intangible capital. More importantly, the *free* development of capacities enters the discussion as an important element of society. Ultimately, the relationship between the social spheres influences the transformation of capital and defines the distribution and mechanisms of distribution of freed capital. The latter is the focus of the thesis, as the mechanisms for the distribution of freed capital define whether there is *free* development of capacities or not. First, Chapter 3 will provide the basis on why should *freed capital* be made available for the *free* development of capacities, and not its *unfree* development.

3 Human aspirations, freedom, and the social spheres

The aim of the third chapter is to focus on the relationship of freedom and the development of capacities. Section 1 (“Why link human capacities and freedom?”) aims to establish the relationship between freedom and development of capacities made by a few philosophers. This answers the question “What is the relationship between freedom and the free development of capacities?”. Amartya Sen states that the importance of economic growth doesn’t answer why economic growth is needed (Sen 1997). This is a question on the aims of life. Sen intrinsically relate freedom and the development of capacities and states them as substantial for the enrichment of life and support the potential for people to achieve to lead the lives that they “value – and have reason to value” (Sen 1999:31), to define their own aims. Another important perspective on the importance of human capacities is Aristotle’s human flourishing (*Eudaimonia*). Aristotle proposed that *Eudaimonia* (human flourishing) can lead to the ‘good life’ which is based on rational activity with excellence or virtue (Aristotle 1980). Aristotle reached to this conclusion by focusing on what is essential to humans compared to other living beings (Rasmussen 1999:38-39). For Aristotle, to have a life that would only pursue pleasure would be “tantamount to choosing the life of dumb grazing animals” (Nussbaum 1987:44). The development of capacities is critical for human beings to lead a ‘good life’. Aristotle doesn’t directly mention freedom as a part of human flourishing; however, he focuses on the need of use of “practical reason” and choice to flourish as humans. For Aristotle, choice was the “deliberate desire of things in our power” (Aristotle et al. 2009:xxvii). Practical reason is critical to “deliberately” choose our actions and lives. The continuous development of practical reason leads to the virtue of practical wisdom (Rasmussen 1999). The importance of choice, and therefore freedom, is to have the space for the practice and development of our own practical wisdom. In this manner, freedom is a necessary condition for human flourishing, but it is not enough to obtain it as the individual needs to develop their capacities as to obtain virtue. Amartya Sen puts freedom at the centre of social development and in human lives. Human capacities are necessary; however, Sen allows for the aims of life to be open-ended. In accordance with Aristotle, Sen also sees freedom as a necessary condition for the development of other human activities that bring value in their life apart from just basic necessities. Paulo Freire also voices the need of “higher” freedoms related to the use of human capacities, rather than just “freedom from hunger” (Freire [1970] 2000). The core importance of freedom seems to be connected to the need of it for the development of human capacities. This in turn would provide the potential for each individual to create and achieve aims in life in accordance with their context.

The meaning of freedom and what it entails in human life is a highly contested topic. Section 2 (“Three Concepts of Freedom”) aims to answer the question “What is freedom? How has it been defined?” as to clarify what is meant with it especially in the context of this thesis. As the section title suggest, it focuses on three “forms” of freedoms. Moreover, the section also answers to the question “How do the different concepts of freedom relate to each other?”.

The first type of freedom is *negative freedom* which is defined by Isaiah Berlin as the “absence of obstacles to the fulfilment of a man’s desire” (Berlin [1969] 1992:xxxviii). For Berlin, “negative liberty is, as it were, a function of what doors, and how many, are open to

him” (Berlin [1969] 1992:xlvi). Negative freedom allows for the minimum space or lack of external interference where people can make use of freedom to make their own decision. However, negative freedom for its own sake is not why other philosophers find it important. Berlin perceives another type of freedom: “the ‘positive’ sense of the word ‘liberty’ derives from the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master.” (Berlin 2002:178). Berlin perceives this positive freedom to be at the basis of authoritarian regimes as it involves the danger that the individual, convinced by his own ideas and the universality of them, attempts to impose his ideas in others. Berlin connects this behaviour, the socialization of positive freedom, with the rationalist Enlightenment philosophy (Berlin 2002b). The Enlightenment may lead to coercion, limiting others negative freedom, if the rationality developed is believed to be universal (Garrard 1997).

Berlin’s perspective on the consequences of positive freedom contrast with those of another thinker: Erich Fromm. Fromm argues for a “higher” form of freedom which relates to the development of capacities to act creatively and unselfishly (Fromm [1942] 2001:26:232) which he also calls positive freedom. Fromm’s definition of positive freedom has an individual and social aspect. Compared to Berlin’s perspective, Fromm connects the desire for coercion (on the part of the coercer as well as the coerced) to a lack of character development, that is, a lack of positive freedom. Fromm’s perspective of positive freedom also connects with other philosophers who saw the development of human capacities as the key importance of why negative freedom is needed. Moreover, the development of positive freedom would provide the individual with better capacity to use their negative freedom more responsibly. Berlin’s positive freedom will be referred to as *Enlightenment freedom* and exemplifies how an ideal of human life leads to the diminishing of other individuals’ negative freedom by imposing said ideal. Enlightenment freedom is necessary to understand how different actors interact with each other in the next section on “Freedom of Education” and the developments on education reform in Chapter 4.

Section 3 (“Freedom of Education”) aims to answer the questions “How could the disposable time that arises from productivity growth in the economy serve the free development of individuals?” and “What mode of funding education could safeguard freedom of education?”. Hereby, other philosophers enter who have related freedom more closely to education and the importance of freedom of education in human lives (or rather the potential losses to human life if there isn’t freedom of education). The first philosopher is Abraham Kuyper who, during the Dutch School Struggle, argued that freedom of education is an essential freedom. According to Kuyper, the Dutch government used education to change “how a person thinks and how he lives, to change his head and his heart, his home and his country” (Kuyper [1879] 2015:2). He directly criticizes the Enlightenment perspective in education as those that supported it “insisted that their own ‘rational’ outlook must be taught in all schools as if the nation were to ever to grow up into an enlightened way of life” (Naylor 2012:262). John Stuart Mill was another advent opponent of a general State education as for him it was “...a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another; and as the mould in which it cast them is that which please the dominant power in government, whether this be a monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of the existing generation; in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading to one over the body” (Mill [1859] 2001:173). Mill saw, as with the other philosophers in the first section, the importance of freedom for the expression and development of human faculties. He clearly states it as “He who chooses his plans for himself, employs all of his faculties. He must use observation to see, reasoning and judgement to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness and self-control to hold to his deliberate decision” (Mill [1859] 2001, Chapter III) and

“freedom to choose and to experiment” is what “distinguishes men from the rest of nature” (Berlin 2002a). He saw that the legitimate effect of increasing wealth is abridging labour (Cowen and Shenton 1996:38). A similar way as to how Marx saw the legitimate effect of machinery to create disposable time for all. For Mill, the abridging of labour would be able to bring development of the individual which involved education, choice, and individuality that could only be possible in societies which tolerance and rational discussions were permitted (Cowen and Shenton 1996:41). In some way, for these philosopher, freedom of education, namely negative freedom for the development of capacities, is essential for a human to be truly human being as it allows the necessary space for them to develop their capacities to live a human life. Otherwise, the individual is to become into mere “industrious sheep” in the name of “philanthropy, democracy, and equality” (Berlin 2002a:228). These authors clearly question the perspective of the Enlightenment freedom in education.

Therefore, the ideal is to have negative freedom from which people can creatively develop their essential qualities and open up to the potential of developing positive freedom. How can freedom of education be safeguarded based on what is discussed in this chapter? Enlightenment freedom in the political sphere is allowed if there isn't a direct violation of the cultural sphere's negative freedom. Regarding the economic aspects, society at large need to understand that the resources for funding education need to provide the opportunity for people to determine their own lives; to be able to enjoy negative freedom in the formation of their human capacities. Only in this way can the productivity gains from the capital cycle be a truly virtuous cycle for generalized human flourishing. It is important to understand that negative freedom is for the one receiving education, and when these are not able to choose (i.e., very young children), it is the parents' task to choose the education for their children that best fits them and from which they will benefit most. Moreover, as education is through the relationship between the teacher and the student (in education institutions), freedom of education also involves the right of the teacher. The teacher would not be forced to believe or profess things that they have not themselves researched and validated.

What would an education funding system that acknowledge these conditions look like? Which funding system would safeguard the necessary liberty of those giving and receiving education? The cultural sphere needs to be independent, as it is defended by many thinkers on the purpose of education that need it needs to be. To achieve this, and in accordance with the capital cycle in Chapter 2, the political sphere would collect freed capital from the economic sphere on behalf of the cultural sphere and distribute it on an equal per student basis. Critically, this funding would not attach any conditions from the political or economic demands. Otherwise, it would breach the needed negative freedom of the cultural sphere which is fundamental for freedom of education. Therefore, the definition of quality and ends of education is left to the teachers (in creating curriculums or deciding in which existing ones to participate) and students (or parents) in the various ways that they can agree on.

All this requires positive freedom in the economic sphere so that freed capital is made freely available to the cultural sphere. It is also important that is understood that the economic sphere is not a sphere where total negative freedom should be permitted as this would weaken the capacity of the individuals in the economic sphere to give away to fund for their education on the basis of their ideals. Enlightenment freedom is allowed in the political sphere, as this is the sphere of law and regulation, but only to regulate practical matters such as to ensure minimum standards in infrastructure or adopt regulations to secure funding from the economic sphere. Nonetheless, these minimum standards in infrastructure should be clear to not nudge or incentivize a certain type of pedagogy or belief. Lastly, there should not be minimum standards imposed by the political sphere in terms of the curriculum provided in

the school and its quality as this is clearly a violation of the negative freedom that the cultural sphere requires.

3.1 Why link human capacities and freedom?

Chapter 2 provides a perspective on how economic productivity is related to the free development of capacities through disposable time. Marx states that in previous eras only the few who didn't labour were the ones who could fully develop their potential capacities. However, with the rise of the machinery (physical capital) it was possible to open this opportunity to everyone. By distributing in a more equitable manner the disposable time (freed capital) for the development of human capabilities (intangible capital), there is the potential that more people can become a part of the process of creating progress, and not only an instrument of it which is characteristic of societies with high inequality (Sánchez-Ancochea 2021). One and a half centuries later from Marx's writing of the Fragment on Machines, and the non-labour of the few persist at the expense of the development of intangible capital of most of the population. The conception that being human is related to our capacity to influence our surroundings and define our aims can be seen in many thinkers. In this chapter, we will focus on a few. This perspective contrasts with the view of Neoclassical Economics (NCE) where people are only means of production, as embodied, for example, in Solow's production function. In NCE, the means and ends of human life is production and consumption respectively. However, it is argued that this perspective is very narrow. People should not be means of others and should choose their ends. To have a good society is not only necessary to produce material wealth. The development of intangible capital should be more than for economic production. In the words of Amartya Sen, the focus on the accumulation of human capital (hereby a part of intangible capital) for economic growth doesn't answer to why economic growth is needed (Sen 1997). Aristotle also perceived this⁸. Therefore, what does it mean to develop intangible capital for its own sake or the aims that each person defines for themselves? And why should we do it?

Paulo Freire ([1970] 2000), a philosopher who worked on education with underserved communities, states the need to expect more than the fulfilment of our biological needs:

“They must realize that they are fighting not merely for *freedom from hunger*, but for ... *freedom to create and to construct, to wonder and to venture*. Such freedom requires the individual to be active and responsible, not a slave or a well-fed cog in the machine... It is not enough that men are not slaves; if social conditions further the existence of automatons, the result will not be the love of life, but love of death” (Freire [1970] 2000; Added Emphasis)

On a similar note, Amartya Sen states that the capacity of being literate and numerate is substantial for the enrichment of life (Sen 1999:46) and they complement and are the base of other functionings that are necessary for human capabilities, for example, political participation. For Sen, for human beings to be the end of development is for them to obtain the “totality of freedoms” that would amount of the individual “to live their fuller social person, exercising their own volitions and interacting with – and influencing – the world in which we live” (Sen 1999:28), and to be able to lead the lives that they “value – and have reason to value” (Sen 1999:31). Freire's and Sen's perspective can be seen as echoes to Aristotle's *eudaimonia* (Human Flourishing).

⁸ “The life of money-making is one undertaken under compulsion, and wealth is evidently not the good we are seeking; for it is merely useful and for the sake of something else” (Aristotle et al. 2009:7).

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle tackles the question of what *eudaimonia*, or the ‘good life’, is and how to live it. From this process, Aristotle reaches to the conclusion that the best life is one of rational activity with excellence or virtue (Aristotle et al. 2009:xii). He establishes that “practical reason” is the essential characteristic of humans, therefore, without this rational activity one would not live a human life. The continuous practice of practical reason would lead to its excellent and virtuous use, to the virtue of practical wisdom (Rasmussen 1999:16). Moreover, practical reason is the core factor that relate all virtues (Nussbaum 1987). Eudaimonia, as to obtain virtue or excellence, involves the “state of character involving choice and consist in observing the mean relative to us, a mean defined by a rational principle, *such as a man of practical wisdom would use to determine it*” (The *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1107a1-3⁹ cited by Rasmussen 1999:16; Emphasis added by Rasmussen). Eudaimonia requires the natural capability for deliberation and practical reason (Nussbaum 1987:27). The freedom that is required to reach human flourishing is the freedom to be able to apply practical reason as to our own context. To be deprived of this capacity is to live in an animal way. This includes, for Aristotle, the life that would only pursue pleasure as this would “tantamount to choosing the life of dumb grazing animals” (Nussbaum 1987:44). A clear contrast to the Utilitarian perspective that underpins NCE.

For Aristotle, the development of capacities was essential to obtain virtue and, therefore, Eudaimonia. This in turn leads people to lead a good life in accordance with their “...set of circumstances, talents, endowments, interests, beliefs, and histories that descriptively characterize the individual –what I shall call his or her ‘nexus’- as well as the individual’s community and culture” (Rasmussen 1999:14). However, the deprivation of this capacity doesn’t only come from personal choice, if ever. On the context of Freire and Sen, this deprivation may occur due the lack of social institutions that can provide them or existence of other type of institutions that would restrict their provisions. Even to provide menial labour and task is to deprive people of their humanity and affects their human flourishing:

“Many actual forms of human life, he [Marx] observes, bring it about that human beings perform their various functionings in a merely animal way. Since the worker lacks choice and control over his own activity, ‘in his human functions he no longer feels himself to be anything but an animal.’ He eats, drinks procreates in a way that is separated from choice; thus, though these ‘are also genuinely human functions,’ he is performing in an animal way. Again: his sense, if used without a certain freedom of choice and freedom from the pressure of immediate want, will be used in a merely animal manner¹⁰” (Nussbaum 1987:49) – Brackets added.

This is exemplary on how human flourishing and human capacities depend on different social institutions. Jobs, which are defended by many NCE economists as only should be created on a “free-market” whose only goal is optimize profits, under this view become essential on providing a humane life¹¹. The fulfilment of basic needs is essential for human flourishing, as

⁹ The version of On the version of the *Nicomachean Ethics* used in this thesis (Aristotle 1980), the complete quote of 1107a1-3 is: “Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by reason, and by that reason by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it.”

¹⁰ The quote that Nussbaum refers to is: “It is obvious that the human eye gratifies itself in a way different from the crude, non-human eye; the human ear from the crude ear, etc... The sense caught up in crude practical need has only a restricted sense. For the starving man, it is not the human form of food that exists, but only its abstract being as food; it could just as well be there in its crudest form, and it would be impossible to say wherein this feeding-activity differs from that of animals” (Marx 1844)

¹¹ Acemoglu voiced concern on the high amount of “low-quality” of jobs that are being created and supported the need for policy that would lead to “good jobs”(Acemoglu 2019; Acemoglu and Restrepo 2019). However,

without it, this lack of sustenance becomes a barrier to the expression of the qualities that are required to reach Eudaimonia: Education, a job, or free time where “excellent rational activity” or “practical reasoning” may be practiced and used to develop virtue in each context an individual may confront are examples of what could be basis for human flourishing. Where does freedom come into play? Aristotle’s perspective states the clear need of practical reason and choice to obtain virtue. For Aristotle, choice is the “deliberate desire of things in our power” (Aristotle et al. 2009:xxvii). To be able to employ practical reason as to “deliberately” choose our actions and our lives requires freedom. However, the clear importance of this freedom is to reach human flourishing. As said before, to just lead a life of mere pleasure (even if pleasure may be an essential part of human flourishing) is to lead a life of animals. In a way, freedom coupled with the development of capacities allow us to obtain Eudaimonia. Another perspective in which freedom is central is Sen’s *Development as Freedom* (1999). Amartya Sen puts freedom in the centre of social development and in human lives. Nussbaum and Marx provide instances where not to have freedom as to apply “practical reason” would mean to lead lives that are not human. Freire calls for the attention of “higher” freedoms. Another prominent thinker, Isaiah Berlin, states while reflecting on J.S. Mill perspective that freedom is essential to human nature:

“The defence of liberty consists in the ‘negative’ goal of warding off interference. To threaten a man with persecution unless he submits to a life in which he exercises no choices of his goals; to block before him every door but one, no matter how noble the prospect upon which it opens, or how benevolent the motives of those who arrange this, is to sin against the truth that he is a man, a being with life of his own to live” - (Berlin 2002b:174-175)

Freedom is a requirement that liberal thinkers and fighters for freedom of education emphasize that as “there ought to exist a certain minimum area of personal freedom which must on no account be violated; for if it is overstepped, the individual will find himself in an area too narrow for even the minimum development of his natural faculties which alone makes it possible to pursue, or to even convince, the various ends which men hold good or right or sacred” (Berlin 2002b:171). Berlin argues that the proponents of this notion of freedom did so for the purpose of a “higher aim”. John Stuart Mill would defend freedom as to allow the development of unique potentialities of each individual. The purpose of freedom was for the development of capacities, which according to human flourishing, are those related to the development of virtue.

However, this minimum of personal space is not sufficient to lead to Eudaimonia in Aristotle’s perspective. This freedom is needed to develop practical reason which leads to virtue and human flourishing. Without this space for freedom and the lack of development of capacities, humans can’t flourish in the Aristotelian sense and even less be able to be highly involved in the process of defining their own aims and goals in life.

Freedom, as crucial as it is for human flourishing, is a term that is very debated and that has evolved over time¹², especially as societies’ production capacity has increased and they are able to meet the basic needs of more of its members. However, it is not sufficient. Freedom is

he focused mainly on the issue of compensation and benefits, which are clearly necessary to lead a good life. The importance of the character of the job itself is somewhat secondary. This phenomenon of “low-quality” jobs is also related to what is called “Bullshit jobs”(Graeber 2013), referring to jobs that are unnecessary and mainly exist for the benefit of bureaucracy (Graeber 2015) (Graeber Utopia of Rules).

¹² “The conceptualization of economic needs depends crucially on open public debates and discussions, the guaranteeing of which require insistence on basic political liberty and civil rights” (Sen 1999:142). This process of conceptualization becomes a continuous political process (Sen 1999:148).

required for the development of capacities so that a person can lead a life of a human being. In the framework of Chapter 2, The potential of freedom evolves as the capital cycle can provide more disposable time to society and distribute it as freed capital. In this section, I have discussed the clear need for freedom as to develop human capacities. However, freedom may mean different things in different contexts. The next section explores some of these concepts.

3.2 Three concepts of freedom

This section focuses on the definitions of three concepts of freedom: negative freedom, Enlightenment freedom, and positive freedom. Then, these concepts are discussed on the context of the social spheres (political, cultural, and economic), how their presence in each sphere may affect the relationship between these spheres and thereby the space for the free development of capacities.

For Isaiah Berlin, a person's "negative liberty is, as it were, a function of what doors, and how many, are open to him" (Berlin [1969] 1992:xlvi). A clear definition by Isaiah Berlin is the "absence of obstacles to the fulfilment of a man's desire" (Berlin [1969] 1992:xxxviii). Negative freedom can be seen as necessary due to that "minimum space" or lack of external interference where people can make use of freedom to make their own decisions. This is the classical perspective of negative freedom. However, as discussed in the previous section (Chapter 3 Section 1), the space for negative freedom is for the purpose of developing human capacities. In the perspective of *Eudaimonia*, negative freedom is essential for the development of virtues. Negative freedom is an essential pre-requirement to be "fully human". However, It is not a sufficient condition for the development of capacities and virtues. To actually develop said virtues as to lead truly human lives has been framed as another aspect of freedom: positive freedom.

Erich Fromm relates positive freedom as a fundamental form of freedom which relates to the development of capacities to act creatively and unselfishly (Fromm [1942] 2001:26 & 232). The development of positive freedom leads to beneficial relationship between humans. Positive freedom is the result of using negative freedom for the development of virtues (as in the human flourishing perspective). However, there is another perspective on positive freedom that doesn't see it necessarily as a fully positive development. For Isaiah Berlin, "the 'positive' sense of the word 'liberty' derives from the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master" (Berlin 2002:178). Similarly, to Erich Fromm, both relate positive freedom to the development of capacities as to create virtue.

For Isaiah Berlin's conception of positive freedom, it involves the danger that the individual, convinced by his own ideas and the universality of them, attempts to impose his ideas on others. Berlin is referring to the basis of authoritarian regimes whose origins are pinpointed to the rationalist Enlightenment philosophy (Berlin 2002b). In the monist perspective of the Enlightenment, maximum freedom will be achieved in a rational world; therefore, society should be designed rationally. The Enlightenment thinkers taught that all rational or scientific principles that were developed were objective and universally valid. The Enlightenment justified the use of force to "enforce" freedom into individuals who do not grasp the rationalists' ideal world¹³.

¹³ The *Social Contract* by Rousseau represents this defense as the state that individuals must sometimes be "forced to be free" (Garrard 1997).

Fromm's concepts of positive freedom don't include this danger as it is more closely related to the development of virtues. Fromm views the tendency to control others as a lack of character development¹⁴, therefore, as an *absence* of positive freedom. By contrary, Enlightenment liberalism would perceive the subjugation of people as positive freedom when this leads to a more rational society. The latter supposedly generates freedom for everyone, even if those coerced do not perceive it this way. To support an Enlightenment type of "freedom" is to restrict others' negative freedom if they are not behaving rationally.

Fromm's positive freedom, from here on only referred as "positive freedom", does not result in the imposition of one's ideals onto others. Fromm acknowledges the potential of human beings to surpass their instincts and to consider the needs of others. This can be called the potential to be "other-interested" (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019:121)¹⁵. However, Fromm also emphasizes that this kind of freedom does not come automatically, and that it requires character development to enter an unselfish relationship with others. The latter can be related further to Aristotle's Eudaimonia as he acknowledges that to obtain virtue, the base of Eudaimonia, we need to be educated by habituation (Aristotle et al. 2009:xiii). In this way, Aristotle and Fromm align. Sen doesn't directly relate freedom to the development of virtue. However, for him, the totality of freedoms, to which human capacities contributes and depends on, should amount for individuals to be "fuller social persons, exercising their own volitions and interaction with -and influencing- the world in which we live" (Sen 1999:28). The development of human capacities is a fundamental aspect of freedom, it can be cause for more freedom to behave as a person truly sees fit. In this way, positive freedom can be connected to that aim for which negative freedom is needed as discussed in the first section in this chapter. To develop human capacities through our own direction, as to obtain virtue or responsibly relate to others and the world in the sense of being other-interested, is to obtain positive freedom. Positive freedom leads us to use of negative freedom more responsibly.

How is all this related to the capital cycle discussed in Chapter 2? A clear importance of the capital cycle is that the normal working of intangible and physical capital in the economy funds the development of human capacities. This can lead us to see that capital is essential for freedom and has an essential role as "enabler of human capacities" (Naastepad and Houghton Budd 2019). The importance of capital and its broader role as "enabler of human capacities" becomes instrumental for the development of evermore positive freedom. Capital is not only for the purpose of our meeting our material needs, which clearly is important in people's life, but also for the purpose of greater goals that can only be achieved or imagined when individuals can freely develop their intangible capital to apply it to matters that they deem valuable. This is the core of what it is to be a human being and to flourish as one.

Enlightenment freedom thus have the danger of hindering the development of others' positive freedom by reducing the pre-required negative freedom. Negative freedom is essential for and valuable due to the potential development of positive freedom and to respect the unique human qualities which these philosophers defended to be essential. A society that is increasingly designed with their dominant perspective of rationality, the ideal view of Enlightenment freedom, is a society that will continuously put limits to the development of others' positive freedom. This has clear consequences to the relationship between the social spheres. All philosophers that were cited defended the need of negative freedom for the exploration of life and/or the free use and development of one's own human capacities. This

¹⁴ Specifically related to sadist and masochist tendencies (Fromm [1942] 2001).

¹⁵ Naastepad and Houghton Budd (2019) refer to the development of being 'other-interested' as the "self-actualisation that includes responsibility for others"

is an activity pertaining to the cultural sphere. Therefore, what these philosophers saw important was the need for negative freedom in the cultural sphere. Ideally, this would create an environment in which people relate more responsibly with each other, however, there is always the need for a space for different perspectives to co-exist and non-violently challenge each other.

3.3 Freedom of Education

“... education is a moral enterprise. How societies go about provisioning education, what content they give, and how they distribute it says a great deal about what they value” - (Mehta and Davies 2018)

What does the presence of Enlightenment freedom in the development of capacities say about a society? Or the fight against it? the struggle for the freedom in the cultural sphere can be easily perceived in the struggle for freedom of education. Even if the cultural sphere embodies many other activities, education is one of its core purposes. It is also one of the activities that is the most directly connected to the purpose of Aristotelian human flourishing and the development of positive freedom:

“ ‘Education is a social process; education is growth; education is not preparation for life but is life itself’ and as such, ‘The educational process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end.’” - Mirrlees and Alvi (2019) citing Dewey (1938)

The struggle for freedom of education could be seen as the struggle for the freedom to define the “end” of life itself. This has attracted many discussions throughout the years on the correct methods and the perspective around education, or even whether there are “correct” ones. What is certain is that the presence of Enlightenment freedom clearly is related to the desire to define a universal “end” of education for everyone. A clear point of judgement on how “liberal” a society may be and how much they allow for human flourishing. The discussion around the funding of education, is the focus of the next chapter. In this section we will focus on other authors who clearly connected freedom and education apart from those already mentioned and what are the conditions for Enlightenment freedom to be absent in education.

A clear event that embodies the struggle for freedom of education is the **Dutch School Struggle** (Naylor 2012). The Dutch School Struggle is said to have happen between 1896 and 1917. It is a struggle for *general* freedom of education. Abraham Kuyper, one of the prominent characters of the Dutch School Struggle, “argued passionately that schools should be taken out of politics and allowed to flourish in civil society, free from church or state control” (Naylor 2012: 256). Kuyper is clearly referring to the need of negative freedom for the individuals to decide on their own education. He sees this as an essential freedom, and the opposite of providing to a central power, in this case the government, the capacity to determine what is education is and to change “how a person thinks and how he lives, to change his head and his heart, his home and his country” (Kuyper [1879] 2015:2). The opposition to Kuyper, ironically the Liberals at the time, would argue that an “impartial teaching of universally acknowledged facts, skills, and attitudes was not only possible but the only ethical option” (Kuyper ([1879] 2015) cited on Naylor (2012: 262-263)). They “insisted that their own ‘rational’ outlook must be taught in all schools as if the nation were to ever to grow up into an enlightened way of life.” (Naylor 2012:262). To do not provide negative freedom of education is to control the ways of life that a person may find. At the time of the Dutch School Struggle, the reason for the government to restrict negative freedom was embodied in the desire to establish an “enlightened way of life” which is supposed to be one

pure and rational way valid in all contexts – a clear example of Berlin’s ‘Enlightenment freedom’. This imposition, as argued in the first section of this chapter, would lead to reducing the humanity of those who are involved in the education system.

The struggle against the political and religious control of education is also voiced by a thinker who was schooled in the “enlightenment way of life” (Berlin 2002a): John Stuart Mill. Mill was educated by his father under this principle. By the words of J.S. Mill, this resulted on turning him to a “desiccated calculating machine, not too far removed from the popular image of the inhuman Utilitarian philosopher” (Berlin 2002a:227). Even after this education, Mill supported a perspective of humanity that rejected the Utilitarian view (Berlin 2002a:226). He saw education as a radical extension of liberty (Cowen and Shenton 1996) and a distinctive human trait:

“Thirdly, though the customs be both good as customs, and suitable to him, yet to conform to custom, merely as custom, does not educate or develop in him any of the qualities which are the distinctive endowment of a human being.” (Mill [1859] 2001, Chapter III).

For Mill, the importance of choice and education was clear to distinguish between being a human and “ape-like” behaviour:

“He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties. He must use observation to see, reasoning and judgment to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness and self-control to hold to his deliberate decision.”(Mill [1859] 2001, Chapter III), and that “he believed that is neither rational thought, nor domination over nature, but freedom to choose and to experiment that distinguishes men from the rest of nature...” (Berlin 2002a:251). The importance of freedom was for humans to be able to employ all their faculties, especially those that would allow them to decide over their own future. This use of faculties, and their development, would clearly need negative freedom from the political sphere or customary influences:

“A general State education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another; and as the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the dominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch, an aristocracy, or a majority of the existing generation; in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading to one over the body” – Mill ([1859] 2001:173)

Moreover, he saw the “false character” of wealth from the legitimate effects of economic growth: abridging labour. It would allow people to replace the ‘art of getting on’ by necessity to the ‘Art of Living’¹⁶ (Cowen and Shenton 1996:38). Mill saw the importance of the development of the mind of human beings to improve life. A development of the mind which required choice, and therefore, liberty. Therefore, At the core of Mill’s perception of development included education, choice, and individuality, which could only occur in societies in which tolerance and rational discussions were permitted (Cowen and Shenton 1996:41). It is also noticeable that for education is not appropriate to decide on education

¹⁶ Mill foresaw a stationary state of economic growth which would provide the environment for this change(Cowen and Shenton 1996:38). Economic growth, for the sake of increasing wealth and population, could lead to the destruction of earth’s “pleasantness” and, therefore, he “... sincerely hope, for the sake of posterity, that they will be content to be stationary, long before compels them to it” (Mill 1865:331).

through a democratic process such as majority voting of the whole population. Mill perceived this tendency to mould and to standardize society. “He perceived that in the name of philanthropy, democracy, and equality of a society was being created in which human objectives were artificially made narrower and smaller and the majority of men were being converted, to use his admired friend Tocqueville’s image, into mere industrious sheep, in which, in his own words, ‘collective mediocrity’ was gradually strangling originality and individual gifts” (Berlin 2002a:228). Freedom of education would be negative freedom from the majority even in a democratic government. Therefore, it means that there should be freedom to decide one own end(s) outside of any voting process or democratic entitlement to political power. This would resonates with Abraham Kuyper, who advocated education system without any intervention in the contents of education by the state (Naylor 2012:270).

These thinkers warning on the control of education were mainly concerned political and religious influence. However, especially today, economic influences and powerful actors due to their economic accumulation are also a concern. Philanthropy which is an activity whose power arises in the economic sphere, has the potential to shape society to the view of a few individuals. Therefore, philanthropy is a political process which through great influence may create the environment for the homogenization of education (which is one of the foci of Chapter 4). Moreover, the growing dominance of the economic sphere led to demands that education should focus around “specialization of tasks and knowledge that forces itself on the school’s inhabitants” (Christie [1971] 2020) rather than the diversity and choice that these philosophers saw critical for a fully lived human life.

The core risk is the dependence of the cultural sphere for funding, there is a danger that it is being influenced or directly manipulated by those providing this funding - that is, either by the economic sphere (from where the funding comes) or by the legal-political sphere (which often is given the task to redistribute money from the economic to the cultural sphere). This shaping of the cultural sphere by the economic and/or the political sphere is the core problem of the lack of freedom of education as it submits those receiving education to what the philosophers discussed saw as an insufficient human life. Moreover, it leaves less space to develop their positive freedom.

The conditions for freedom of education are clear. There needs to be presence of negative freedom in the cultural sphere, regardless of the amount of funding that it requires or may be deemed worthy. This requires for the political and the economic sphere to behave unselfishly, to have positive freedom. The political sphere, due to their law-enforcing role, has the potential for Enlightenment freedom. Nonetheless, this capacity for the Enlightenment freedom should be used where appropriate, and it should not be used to meddle with the cultural sphere. Chapter 4 would provide examples through the educational reforms of the Netherlands and the U.S. from the 19th to the 20th century when the beforementioned conditions are not met, and how this relates to the funding of education.

The issue at hand is, how can freedom of education be safeguarded? Enlightenment freedom in the political sphere is allowed if there isn’t a direct violation of the cultural sphere’s negative freedom. Regarding the economic aspects, society at large need to understand that the resources for funding education need to provide the opportunity for people to determine their own lives; to be able to enjoy negative freedom in the formation of their human capacities. Only in this way can the productivity gains from the capital cycle be a truly virtuous cycle for generalized human flourishing. It is important to understand that negative freedom is for the one receiving education, and when these are not able to choose (i.e., very young children), it is the parents’ task to choose the education for their children that best fits

them and from which they will benefit most. Moreover, as education is through the relationship between the teacher and the student (in education institutions), freedom of education also involves the right of the teacher. The teacher would not be forced to believe or profess things that they have not themselves researched and validated.

What would an education funding system that acknowledge these conditions look like? Which funding system would safeguard the necessary liberty of those giving and receiving education? The cultural sphere needs to be independent, as it is defended by many thinkers on the purpose of education that need it needs to be. To achieve this, and in accordance with the capital cycle in Chapter 2, the political sphere would collect freed capital from the economic sphere on behalf of the cultural sphere and distribute it on an equal per student basis. Critically, this funding would not have any demands from either the political or economic sphere. Otherwise, it would breach the needed negative freedom of the cultural sphere which is fundamental for freedom of education. Therefore, the control of education would be done by the teachers (as proponents of a didactical, pedagogical, and curricular vision) and students (or parents; both as acceptors of said vision) would agree on.

All this requires positive freedom in the economic sphere so that freed capital is freely available to the cultural sphere. It is also important that is understood that the economic sphere is not a sphere where total negative freedom should be permitted as this would weaken the capacity of the individuals in the economic sphere to give away to fund for their education on the basis of their ideals. Enlightenment freedom is allowed in the political sphere, as this is the sphere of law and regulation, but only to regulate practical matters such as to ensure minimum standards in infrastructure or adopt regulations to secure funding from the economic sphere. Nonetheless, these minimum standards in infrastructure should be clear to not nudge or incentivize a certain type of pedagogy or belief. Lastly, there should not be minimum standards imposed by the political sphere in terms of the curriculum provided in the school and its quality as this is clearly a violation of the negative freedom that the cultural sphere requires.

3.4 Conclusions

In Chapter 2, there was an emphasis of expanding the role of capital as to include the free development of capacities, not only its development. However, this requires discussing why this freedom is critical and should be taken as a role for capital. Philosophers such as Aristotle, Amartya Sen, and Paulo Freire have argued there is more to a human life than only the satisfaction of their material needs. Aristotle, through his concept of human flourishing, supports that freedom is essential for as to allow ever the development of virtue. Other thinkers follow a similar path as freedom is required for individuals to discover what kind of life they value and lead it. Even more critically, the lack of freedom in the development of capacities has been equated to reducing human beings to animal-like characteristics.

By exploring further, the concept of freedom is said to have ‘two-side’ of it: negative freedom and positive freedom. Negative freedom refers to the lack of obstacles to our actions, meanwhile, positive freedom is the desire for self-mastery and development. As most thinkers agree on the importance of negative freedom, there is a discordance on the consequences of positive freedom. The discordance, in the thesis, is separated in a view of positive freedom based on the Enlightenment perspective perceived by Isaiah Berlin (that there is a universal and singular ideal and individuals should be made free by fitting them into it) named Enlightenment freedom; and Erich Fromm’s perceptive of positive freedom, which doesn’t lead to the imposition of ideal as the development of the individual and is connected

to the development of their capacity to be responsible and interested in others. The latter is left as positive freedom.

The three concepts of freedoms (negative, Enlightenment, and positive) are used to discuss the proper role of each freedom in the relationship between the social sphere as to obtain freedom of education. Freedom of education is for the individual, not a higher goal, and in the education system it means freedom for the students (or parents if the student is not able to make their own decisions) and the teachers. This requires (1) for the cultural sphere to be the sphere of negative freedom; (2) the political sphere to be the one of Enlightenment freedom with clear attention to do not disrupt the cultural sphere's negative freedom; and (3) the economic sphere to be the one of positive freedom as to provide the necessary resources, in this thesis the resource is freed capital, for the free generalized development of capacities. This setup of freedoms, represented in Figure 3, can safeguard freedom of education in a society.

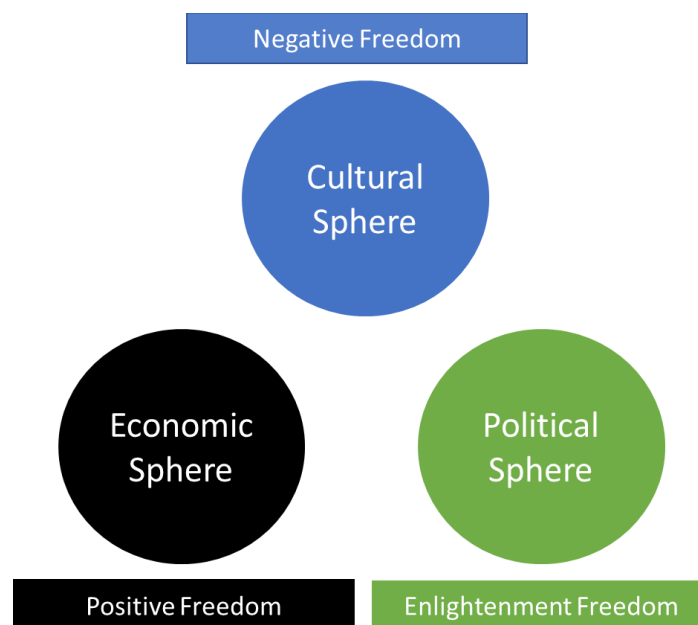


Figure 3. Freedom in their respective social sphere to safeguard of freedom of education. Inspired on Findeli (2008:314)

4 Educational Systems in the 19th, 20th, and 21st century in the Netherlands and the United States of America

The aim of the chapter is to answer, “What are the implications for freedom of education of conventional modes of funding education?”. The answer is based in the cases of the U.S.A and the Netherlands from late 18th century until 21st century. To answer the research question from the cases that are presented is important to answer the sub-questions: “How has education typically been funded in the past one or two centuries, and how it is funded today?”, while extracting the resulting relationship of the social sphere from these systems for funding education. The latter is related to the sub-questions: “How are the political sphere and the cultural sphere related when education is tax-funded/state-funded?” and “How are the economic sphere and the cultural sphere related when education is funded by the market or commercial interests?”. Lastly, as the aim is to frame the resulting relationship between the social spheres to the ideal of freedom of education in Chapter 3 by answering “What does the increased influence of the economic and political sphere (observed in the literature) mean for the free development of capacities (freedom of education)?”.

The structure of the chapter is divided in 3 sections. The Section 1 (“Ideas of education and their funding”) presents the cases through two periods of educational reform in both the Netherlands and the U.S.A. The reason to divide in these two periods is due to the similarity of the ideological context between the countries. The first period, between the late 18th century to early 20th century, presents the struggle to establish (in the U.S.A) and to abolish (in the Netherlands) a government-controlled education system that was to be implemented or was implemented based on ideals from the Enlightenment. The second period, from mid-20th century until 21st century, presents the rise of neoliberal education reforms and its globalization. The adoption of the neoliberal reforms changes the role of the government from that of the first period and allowed for the entry of ever-more economic actors in the definition of ideals of education. Characteristic of this period of reform, there is a global reform movement that aims to expand economic values through education system. After each period case is presented from both country, there is a discussion on what that set of reforms meant for freedom of education as to answer the sub-questions. Section 2 (“Comparing education reforms of the 19th-20th century to the ideal of freedom of education”) presents the synthesis of the cases by defining a general process through which freedom of education is continuously breached. This process demonstrates the core differences between the resulting relationship between the social spheres and the ideal one based on Chapter 3. Moreover, it provides insights on barriers for freedom of education and necessary conditions for the safeguard of freedom of education.

In conclusion, the short history of education reforms shows that the relationship of the sphere is opposite to the ideal from Chapter 3. Critically to the research question, the cases demonstrate that the mode of funding is essential for the relationship between the sphere to lead for freedom of education. Nonetheless, it is not sufficient condition for freedom of education or to safeguard it. Since the main role of educator was given to the political sphere, there is a continuous threat to freedom of education by various instruments that are represented in the cases presented in the chapter (such as, high stakes standardized testing). From the cases is deduced that barriers for freedom of education are: (a) the (constitutional)

circumstances that entrusts the task to control the quality of education to the state (the political sphere as educator of society), and related the attachment of external conditions ('accountability') to the funding of schools; and (b) the influence exerted on the education from the economic sphere (corporations) and the para-political sphere (e.g., philanthropic foundations, a section of the cultural sphere funded by the rich parties in the economic sphere). Moreover, as to safeguard education, it is proposed that, apart from the mode of funding not being sufficient to safeguard freedom of education, (1) (paradoxically) the political sphere is necessary for freedom of education as higher fundraising autonomy may lead to the entrapment of the education system by other actors; and (2) there is a need for teachers or groups of teachers to fully take their roles of educator which entitles the establishment of their own internal quality standards based on their own didactic, pedagogy, and curriculum.

4.1 Ideas of education and their funding

It was broadly defined in Chapter 3 that for freedom of education to be achieved the ideal interaction between the cultural, political, and economic sphere in terms of the freedoms that are critical in each sphere. This chapter aims to explore this relationship between the spheres and how close has it been to the ideal relationship in Chapter 3, Section 3 ("Freedom of Education") through a short history of education reform from the 18th century until the 21st century in the Netherlands and the United States of America (U.S.A.). The first period of study is the 18th century to early-20th century. This period shows a rise of government-regulated schools for the purpose of social unity and education for democracy, called 'common schools' in the U.S.A (Glenn 1987). This period sees a continuous struggle for either the establishment or the de-establishment of the government-regulated system through, critically for this chapter, the conditioning of funding by the government. The conditions of funding are one of the clear factors that define the relationship between the political sphere and the cultural sphere. Mainly, this period is an example on how the relationship between the political and cultural sphere affect education.

The second period is from mid-20th century until the 21st century. This period is characterized by the establishment of the "neoliberal view of education". The neoliberal view replaces the perspective from the last century to one centred more in economic values. Interestingly for this period, there is a puzzling match between the framing of educational policies around the "rise of autonomy" of schools with the need of "rise of accountability" by the government. This puzzling match results from a minimized perspective of autonomy that doesn't truly embody the needed autonomy needed in the schools for freedom of education as discussed in Chapter 3. Hence, the economic sphere enters into the struggle to define by providing measures of autonomy that benefit their economic values. This is done through the use of funds from philanthropy or 'corporate responsibility' for the creation of the *para-political sphere* in the U.S.A (McGoey 2015; Olmedo 2016; Ravitch 2010), and in the Netherlands is done through the *educational-political complex* (Bart Tromp 1993). The para-political sphere and the educational-political complex changes the relationship between the political and cultural sphere in a way that is detrimental for freedom of education as the cultural sphere becomes accountable to a variety of actors outside of those for which freedom of education is for.

4.1.1 The control of education for citizenship in democracy (late 18th century to early 20th century)

In the Middle Ages, most education institutions were private institutions with strong relations, in both curriculum and funding, with the catholic church in the Western world

(Chamberlain 1988). The Catholic Church had a virtual monopoly on formal education. The rise of a new merchant class, which increased the demand for formal education in writing and reading, and Protestantism, which advanced the belief that education was important to read the bible and that it was duty of the state to provide it, provided the initial steps for state-regulated education (O'Brien and Woodrum 2004:589). The idea of government-controlled and general education originates from political theories from the French Enlightenment (Glenn 1987:5) and had the "deliberate effort to create in the entire youth of a nation common attitude, loyalties, values, and to do so under central direction of the State" (Glenn 1987:5). This led to a perspective that "sectarian" education was a threat to the accomplishment of this ideal (Glenn 1987:5). The study of the U.S.A and Netherlands cases presents two distinct "stages" of this agenda. In the Netherlands, the government-controlled and general education system was established after the French invasion of 1795 with the ideal of "conscious modernizing and nation-building intent" (Gilhuis 1974 cited in Naylor 2012). Hence, the time period (late 18th century to 19th century) in the Netherlands mainly demonstrate the struggle from parents that didn't approve of the 'common' and 'secular' education of the schools. This struggle is known as the *Dutch School Struggle* (hereon after referred as *School Struggle*). Meanwhile, in the U.S.A, the same period led to the establishment of said French Enlightenment ideal through the *Common School Movement*.

The imposition of a government-controlled and general education system is a clear example of Enlightenment freedom on behalf of the political sphere in the cultural sphere. Therefore, a violation of the needed negative freedom of the cultural sphere. The following sub-section aims to show the framings of the Dutch School Struggle and the Common School Movement, and especially pinpoint moments where the relationship between funding and freedom of education is clear.

4.1.1.1 The Dutch School Struggle

After the establishment of the monarchy of the Netherlands, the Catholics of the south of the country "were offended by what they considered to be a forcing of Protestant teaching upon their children" (Naylor 2012:250). In 1829, this "Catholic problem" was to be solved by making education "acceptable for children of all religious persuasions" (Naylor 2012:250). This petition increased the dissatisfaction of the orthodox Protestants. It incited a petition to "do not deny us any longer the tender interests of our children. We would rather see our goods consumed than our flesh and blood corrupted" (Gilhuis 1974:10 cited in Naylor 2012:250). This dissent to the education system established by the king led to people to establish their own school even if illegally, or to emigrate to U.S.A where there was freedom to establish private religious schools (Gilhuis 1974:93-94; cited in Naylor 2012). In 1837, Groen van Prinsterer, a historian for the Royal House of Orange, claimed that the "Dutch Public School system was far from being neutral, as it had fallen under the influence of the French Revolution, which understood children to be property of the state and was imposing on children a deistic religion that was foreign to Christianity and to the Netherlands" (Ginsburg 1952:180-181; cited in Naylor 2012). To counter the rise of secularism as a "novel creed of religious atheism and political radicalism" in education, which was counter to many of the Dutch families' beliefs, Groen proposed for schools to adapt their teachings between Catholicism and Protestantism according to local demand. Moreover, if there were parents who didn't follow this religion, they should be allowed to create their own school without any special costs (Naylor 2012:251-252). Given the failure to change the dominant paradigm in schools, and the difficulty to establish new ones with a different theological perspective, Catholics pushed even more strongly for secularism on the basis that they would prefer for their children to be taught any religion than Protestant religion (Naylor 2012:252). In 1848,

the issue of revising the Dutch constitution for the purpose of examining the right of parents to establish independent (or free) schools without undue government resistance rose again. In the 1850s, parents would pressure ‘village schools’ to turn private schools. However, in the regions that were controlled by “theologically-liberal-elite—local authorities refused approval of schools that would compete with the public school” (Glenn 1987:516). This lack of capacity to establish their own confessional schools led to some orthodox Protestants to emigrate to America as to establish their own schools (Glenn 1987:516). In general, the supporters of “freedom of education” were classic liberals, largely disenfranchised Catholics, and Orthodox Protestants (Naylor 2012:252). In this stage of the School Struggle the force of the government is clear in establishing their Enlightenment ideal and securing it. Not only do they provide only funding to their approved type of school but negate the opportunity of parents to establish schools that would compete with them.

In 1869, there was a strong division on visions of elementary school. Both visions were based on different perspectives of the role of Christianity in Dutch identity (Naylor 2012:253), therefore, directly related to a discussion on how to use the education for the creation of a singular national identity. At this moment, enters one of the key freedom fighters of the Dutch School Struggle, Abraham Kuyper. Kuyper believed that “all of human experience and culture was rooted in and to some extent directed by deep religious convictions whether understood and acknowledged or not” (Kuyper [1931] 1994:13; cited in Naylor 2012:255). However, this didn’t extend into a theocratic perspective as Kuyper believed that the Government should not enforce a given religious creed onto its people (Naylor 2012:255). This led Kuyper to criticize the “neutrality” of the public school, as he saw it as a “sect schools of the Modernists” (Naylor 2012:256). Kuyper had a preoccupation of the school being used for the purpose of social engineering in this doctrine, the fear to socialization for the sake of national goals, therefore, he deplored the monopolization of state funds for public education (Naylor 2012:256). The ideal for Kuyper was to take the schools out of politics, free from church or state control, and under the direction of associations of like-minded parents (Kuyper 1890 cited in Naylor 2012). Education should be guided by civil society and not government, as this would negatively affect the “sphere sovereignty” of the cultural sphere. A free society was one that depended on a culture of *self-government* and *voluntary initiative* among the citizenry, not of government management (Naylor 2012:256). In Kuyper’s perspective this would provide autonomy¹⁷ to schools.

Kuyper, in 1874, was proposing a system of schools “established and maintained by legal corporations governed by boards elected by parents whose children attended the school. These school boards would then be overseen by municipal, provincial, and national councils, which would monitor minimum academic standards, building, and hygiene standards, as well as guarantee that no parents were forced to send their children to a school whose religious worldview offended their conscience. Such as system, he argued, had the advantage of ensuring that schools responded to the real-life needs of children in harmony with the spiritual and moral life at home” (Naylor 2012:261)¹⁸. The importance for Kuyper to have an education system that allowed this harmony was that he thought “all morality was rooted in metaphysical questions over which there was, and could never be, universal agreement, and between which the state should never choose” (Naylor 2012:264).

¹⁷ The definitions of autonomy are “the quality or state of being self-governing”, “self-directing freedom and especially moral independence”, and “a self-governing state” (Merriam-Webster n.d.).

¹⁸ In Kuyper’s proposal the parents are the only members of the school board. However, in the development of the U.S. in the 20th century, the role of the teacher is also proposed as essential for the establishment and management of the schools.

A clear example on the liberals intentions for all education to only be government controlled was in 1874 when a Liberal leader Jan Kappeyne van de Copello was part of the “Young Liberals” party and “declared war on the confessional school” (Glenn 1987:522). In a speech he insist that “the orthodox minority deserves to be oppressed, because it was the fly that spoiled the whole ointment, ‘and has no right to exist in our society’” (Glenn 1987:522). The mechanisms which was used on this “war” was the passage of legislation increasing substantially the physical and staffing requirements for all elementary schools while the government would cover 30% of the cost of public schools to lighten the load of the municipalities (Glenn 1987:522). This would have a critical impact on private schools as they did not receive government funding and depended on the tuition of parents which some were already making large sacrifices to have their children in these schools (Glenn 1987:520). In another example, when municipalities understood that they were required to provide public schooling even in places where private schools were available and chosen, they completely tax-funded the public schools as to ensure enrolment (Glenn 1987:520) while private education depended on tuition fees. Another way to complicate the finances of those that desire private schooling by creating unequal competition between schools by funding only one type of school¹⁹. For freedom of education, the legislation of the liberals demonstrates another problem. Not all conditioning of private schools come from the control of funding. The political sphere may be able to create legislation that complicates the establishment and sustainability of schools through the establishment of minimum quality or requirements directly related to the functioning of the school (in this case the staff requirements). Moreover, they create an unequal field of competition between schools in terms of tuition fees that would lead most parents in low socioeconomic status to choose the government school out of need.

After the passing of the liberal legislation to increase the requirements of elementary schools, led to the movement of the “orthodox common people” that in a decade led to the reversal of “the political fortunes and brought State support for confessional schools” (Glenn 1987:523). In 1887, Baron Mackay, Prime Minister at the time, proposed an Education Bill that would secure state funding of one-third of the operating expenses of free schools (Naylor 2012:270). Even if this wasn’t Kuyper’s ideal system, he was content that it achieved *legal equality* between state schools and free schools as non-state school would receive funding due to a right and not charity. Kuyper supported the bill because it “recognizes the freedom of the government to support good schools, even if they are religious; and because it prepares and promotes the development of the free school” (Waterink 1937:167-168; cited in Naylor 2012). This ignited the development of total equality between private and public schools reached in 1917 in which funding between state and non-sate schools was equal per student (Naylor 2012; Patrinos 2011). The only aspect that was still lacking is that the government was also to be the institutions to ensure of quality of both the private and public school (as it is stated in the article 23 of the Dutch constitution²⁰), opening the education system to Enlightenment Freedom again in the 21st century.

The result of the Dutch School Struggle is seen as a success for freedom of education by reaching equal funding regardless of world view. It is a core advancement in freedom of education that the government would provide equal funding to any ‘non-secular’ education,

¹⁹ This issue is referred as the ‘double-taxation’ problem. It will be discussed and considered in Chapter 5 in the design of the educational system that would safeguard education.

²⁰ “Education shall be the constant concern of the Government” and many mentions on how education shall be regulated by “Act of Parliament”. This Act of Parliament is to be “paying due respect to everyone’s religion or belief” (Franken and Bertram-Troost 2021:4).

as long as it met minimum standards. Ideally, the end of the struggle in 1917 would provide funding unconditional on the metaphysical aspects of life. However, even Kuyper was worried that the “competition system” that was created between the public and the private schools would “impeded the pedagogical development of the nation’s schools by forcing parents to choose schools solely to religious principles, thereby undermining any competition between schools for pedagogical excellence” (Naylor 2012:265). Until modernity, this has been a clear characteristic of the Dutch education system through the 20th century and into the 21st, and it’s referred as the compartmentalization of society (Karsten 1999; Patrinos 2011). However, the diversity between schools of the same denomination (Catholic, Protestant, and so on) in terms of their religious teaching seems to be high compared to other similar system²¹ (Franken and Bertram-Troost 2021). Religious education is just a small section of the curriculum in most schools; however, it shows how the role (or the lack of one) of the government affects the teaching of a topic. The issue with the curriculum at large is more prevalent in the next period of educational reforms.

The School Struggle shows that funding is essential for the establishment of the right (in the sense that it is fully available to everyone) of freedom of education. However, the involvement of the political sphere as to establish this right lead to several complications. The first complication of the introduction of the political sphere in the education system is that when it desires to expand access to education, it doesn’t necessarily mean that freedom of education is expanded. To the contrary, it usually means that it is reduced as the political sphere is able to support one set of views over others. Second, when private schooling is allowed (but not equally funded), freedom of education becomes a privilege or a sacrifice to the families. Therefore, most of the education system stays in an *unfree* state. Third, even when private schooling is allowed, the political sphere may create regulatory conditions as to affect the sustainability of schools as they depend on tuition fees covered by the parents or donors. Consequently, the introduction of the political sphere tends to a diminishing of freedom of education. However, the Dutch School Struggle demonstrate that there can be positive developments for freedom of education after the self-introduction of the political sphere. If the political sphere collects the funding for education, it can be achieved that government and private schools reach legal equality as to receive equal funding per student. It is worth noting, in line with the third complication, that legal equality between public and private education is not a sufficient condition to safeguard education.

In the Dutch system of state-funding, the distribution of the funding is done through a per-student basis in which the government sends the funds to the school of choice of the students. In government schools it has total control over how its resources are used. The core role of the government is in the control of the inputs of education (meaning the potential sources and use of funding, the curriculum, and the staff selection). This end result for freedom of education is far from ideal as education resulted in the “constant concern” of the government. The only advancement in terms of freedom of education was to not force anyone into a pedagogical or religious view that they didn’t support. This negative freedom was the only

²¹ In the Netherlands, there seems to be high autonomy and diversity on how schools from the same denomination (Catholic, Protestant, and so on) approach the teaching of religious education. This was compared to the Flemish education system where there seem to be less diversity as religious education need to be approved by a government recognized religious institution (Franken and Bertram-Troost 2021). Even if it is a small section of the curriculum, this shows that the involvement of the government as to “recognize” leads to lower diversity. The establishment of minimum requirements in any topic, and the definition of which topics are to have minimum requirements, can be seen as an involvement of the government as “recognizer” of what is and not proper education. This requirement of “government recognition” would open any topic and system to lower diversity.

that was secured correctly, as is shown by the larger diversity of religious teaching and pedagogical approaches (Jenaplan, Dalton, Waldorf schools, 'Ieder-wijs' schools, etc.) in the Netherlands. However, the freedom of education was not safeguarded especially to non-religious topics, and even pedagogies were influenced by the state as it is discussed in the reforms of the 20th century.

4.1.1.2 The Common School system in the U.S.A.

Before introducing this period of reform in the U.S.A, it is important to introduce the nature of politics in the U.S.A concerning educational reforms. The country involves at least two level of government: the state government and the federal government, and occasionally, the district government. However, for educational reforms, the policies are discussed mainly at the state and federal level. For the purpose of freedom of education as defined in Chapter 3, the involvement of either the state or federal government is a potential intrusion of the cultural sphere's negative freedom. Therefore, a system that is controlled either by the state or federal government will be broadly referred to government education. Nonetheless, the state and the federal government may have different roles, and expectations, in the U.S.A in education, and they will be specified when needed.

The 19th century saw the rise of the government-controlled and general education in the U.S.A. This period has been called the common school movement and was supported by "well-educated men and women" who were parts of groups which increased in prominence in the "growing cities and provincial centres as commerce and industry developed but were not themselves directly engaged in either. They were lawyers, clergymen, journalist, promoters of ideas and causes" (Glenn 1987:10). The role of the federal government was limited and mainly supported it through federal subsidies and provision of land (mainly for agricultural schools) (Brackemyre n.d.) which were to be rented for the funding of the schools, however, it wasn't enough funding and a tax-funded school system started to be seen as a necessity (O'Brien and Woodrum 2004). The ideal of the movement was to establish a system of 'common schools' regulated by the government that would "...create in the entire youth of a nation common attitude, loyalties, and values, and to do so under the central direction of the State" (Glenn 1987:5). For the next generation of people to grow up "with the state, of the state and for the state" (Glenn 1987:315). In Ohio, the common school movement was embodied in the formation of academic groups which would educate other teachers and provide funds for them to spread and promote the ideal of the common school all over the state (O'Brien and Woodrum 2004:609-610).

The social context to which the common school movement started was from Colonial America. During Colonial America, many of the immigrants from Europe set their own schools following their own traditions (O'Brien and Woodrum 2004:589). This bottom-up system without government interference or involvement reached a higher men's literacy rate (education was favoured to men at the time) than Britain and France at the time as reading was seen as a necessary skill for religion (i.e., to read the bible) (Lynch 2011). However, this type of education, as in the resources it received, depended heavily on the social class of the student (Land of the Brave n.d.). It was mainly the families' duty to provide "good and godly education" (Vassar 1971:52). When America became independent, several "Founding Fathers" expressed the belief in the necessity of public education, out of which Thomas Jefferson directly saw it achieved (Britannica n.d.). At the beginning of the 19th century, there was already the local support for some type of public education. However, it was the Massachusetts' board of education, dominantly through the leadership of Horace Mann, that expanded and professionalized education provision and supervision. Other states continue to

adopt the common school system, and later it was expanded to include both elementary and secondary education (Britannica n.d.). The vision of Horace Mann was of

“Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of men – the balance wheel of the social machinery” (Mann 1848)

This can be seen as a response to the great difference between the education that distinct social classes would reach and the diversity of religious views that immigrated to colonial America. The perspective of the French Enlightenment is clear in both Horace Mann and Thomas Jefferson (Chamberlain 1988). The ideas of the common school potentially reached through William Ellery Channing to Horace Mann, who persuaded him to take on the “intellectual and moral improvement” of future citizens, and for the school to be a national bastion “with the students carrying a common image of their country in their minds” (Chamberlain 1988). As U.S.A. was at the beginning of their democratic project, it was seen as a need to have an “enlightened citizenry” (Britannica n.d.). To convince “men of property”, Horace Mann asserted that their security and prosperity depended upon having literate and law-abiding neighbours who were competent workers and who would, via the common school, learn the sanctity of private property (StateUniversity.com n.d.). The main motivation for the establishment of the common school system seems related to shape people to a conception of an “ideal” society, therefore, to the perspective of Enlightenment freedom. Moreover, it clearly presents how the political sphere inserted itself in existing education systems as the regulator and educator of society. Due to the political structure of the U.S.A, the political spheres that put on themselves the duty of education were the state governments. The federal level only restricted themselves to incentivize its implementation. The common schools depended mainly on state and local funding, and it was under the state authority. It was still possible to establish private schools, however, this would be only possible to those that could afford it.

In the common school system, the relationship between religion and state education (secular, aspiring to an Enlightenment ideal of education) was treated differently in the U.S.A compared to the Netherlands in the same period. The common school ideal strictly saw religion as a private matter, and not related to the education that should be provided to the student (Naylor 2012). Moreover, it saw the provision of government funds to private schools as going against the role a secular state. Moreover, the proponents of the common school thought that the “rivalry of schools created by different sects” to be greatest impediment to the “advancement of the cause” (O’Brien and Woodrum 2004:617). The strength of this belief, or also the exclusion of opposing views, can be shown by how in the discussion for the legislation of the common school system in Ohio where there was no plea for sectarian education; instead, the main worry was how to make clear enough that “the common schools would not be used for proselytizing” (O’Brien and Woodrum 2004:617).

In their increasing emphasis on secularization, it is worth noting that ‘secular’ has two potential meanings (Merriam-Webster n.d.): (1) of or relating to the worldly or temporal, (2) not overtly or specifically religious, and (3) not ecclesiastical or clerical. Interestingly, it is proposed that what was meant as secular education was not of the first meaning but rather more related to the third. The ideal of the common school pertained to a religious ideal of an unitarian view of Christianity (Glenn 1987). The reformers in favour of the common school “wished to give primary emphasis, in religion, to the prescriptive elements on which, they believed, there was no differences among Christians of various denominations; on the other, they preferred to clothe morality in a sentimental religiosity, presenting it as a matter of the heart rather than of the head” (Glenn 1987:328). This imposition of the unitarian religious

ideal was criticized as an elitist interference “with the social order anchored in local realities and more” (Glenn 1987:336). Horace Mann would neglect these critiques as “religious bigotry”, rather than seeing it legitimate worry about the “use of the common schools as the instrument for developing a new unifying faith” (Glenn 1987:337). A faith that was in line with the beliefs of the merchants and clergymen of the cities, but not from the agricultural sections of society (Glenn 1987:336-337). The reformers seemed to be more preoccupied with the use of the common school “to create social harmony far more than to teach literacy and other skills” (Glenn 1987:337).

The “non-sectarian” characteristic of the Common School System was criticized by Catholics and intended to obtain a share of the public funds of education. However, it failed (StateUniversity.com n.d.). They created their own parochial schools which were not allowed to obtain federal funding. Some immigrant groups also felt threatened by the movement for state systems of publicly funded common schools which would “erode or wipe out their diverse institutions”, meanwhile other immigrant groups would support the common school system for a rapid process of “Americanization” (O’Brien and Woodrum 2004:608). Even Protestants would decide to support the implementation of the common school from fear of the increased immigration from Catholics (Glenn 1987:24).

The struggle for freedom of education in the U.S.A only achieved the right to establish private schools. Tellingly, the fact that Protestants supported the common school due to fear of Catholic immigration shows how the definition of what is taught in these schools become part of the political process in society at large. The definition of the school curriculum become a tool against other minority perspectives, and due to the control of the government over it, it opens the education system to diverse strategies from different political actors to secure what is or not to be educated in the active exclusion of those perspectives. A clear transgression to the ideal of freedom of education. In the end, the state government would define all the inputs of education and students would be located depending on the decisions of the government. Thus, forming a government-controlled and general education system for the largest share of students. The common school system thus has been observed as a “gigantic standardized compromise most of us [Americans] have learned to live with” (Kaestle 1976:396). However, more pertinent to the thesis as a whole, Charles Glenn states that the largest “myth” that the common school created was not that universal education is a good thing, or just that it should be made available to all through policy and public responsibility, or not only that someone should define the common content of education (Glenn 1987:498). Rather, the largest myth was that education of an “entire people” depended on “the State serving as educator” as “New England was at least as literate – and as schooled – before Horace Mann as after him” (Glenn 1987:499).

The common school system has been the dominant education system in the U.S.A since the 19th century.

4.1.1.3 The result of the introduction of the political sphere in education

The beginning of this period of educational reform is marked by the introduction of the political sphere in the education system. Even though the process of introduction was different between the U.S.A and the Netherlands, it was based on the same ideal of the Enlightenment. In the establishment of government-controlled and secular schools for the whole of society with the aim of creating a common national image, stopping the spread of ‘non-secular’ views, or, as sometimes explicitly said, aimed at the demise of these views. In the U.S.A, Charles Glenn (1987) saw that the ‘common school’ was to be the religious institution for the formation of a new unifying faith that was seen as universal by the

reformers and supporters of the movement. In the Dutch School Struggle, Abraham Kuyper also saw through the false character of the proposed ‘secular’ education. In both periods of political reforms, the use of funding that was collected through taxes, was a clear point of contention as the political sphere wanted to provide a share of these funds to only promote their ideal. The Dutch School Struggle also presented events in which competition between the government-controlled schools and private schools was discouraged as to benefit the former. More alarming, under the power of establishing minimum standards to the inputs of education which decide whether the schools can receive government funds or not, a political branch of the Dutch government aimed to damage the financial sustainability of the private schools in which some parents were making financial sacrifices to provide for their children.

The end of the period, in terms of the definition of freedom of education in Chapter 3, is far from ideal. The end of the Dutch School Struggle resulted in education being the ‘constant concern’ of the government. The freedom of education that was obtained is framed as the government job to be careful as to not interfere with pedagogical or religious views. The latter led to a very limited space of education to be free as it is shown in the next period of educational reforms. In the U.S.A, the survival of said system doesn’t indicate only the concern but the control of education. The “myth” of the government as the educator of society became successfully embedded into both societies.

The damage to freedom of education of the view of the government as educator is not only the clear lack of freedom, but that the curriculum, for the provision of education for the largest share of students, becomes a central political matter. Moreover, it opens education to become a tool for the accomplishment of whatever ideal is the most politically influential at the time. This is of core importance for the next period of reform where more actors start to become involved in the definition of education.

Before continuing to the late 20th century developments there are necessary distinction to add between public education at the end of the Dutch School Struggle and the establishment of the common school system. Due to the governmental structure of the U.S.A., the main public authority of the common school is the state government. However, a state is divided into school districts. These school districts involve local governments which also contribute to the funding of the common school. Therefore, the funding in the 19th century and early 20th century depended mainly on the tax income of the state government and the property tax of the defined school district (local government). Later the federal government starts providing another part of the funding, however, the state government is still the dominant source of funding (in an average funding per student basis) with around 85% of the total funding. Federal government stands around 8%, and local government funds around 7% (Education Data Initiative 2021). Nonetheless, the allocation of resources per student depends highly on state laws and the value of the property in each school district. Therefore, the common school is “common” in the sense of the authority of the state but may present high inequality of funding depending on the school district (Turner et al. 2016). Therefore, even if the government establishes a “general” education system, as it reaches every person that is deemed necessary for education, the system can be built with high levels of inequality in resources for education.

The next period of education reform provides an overview on how the opening of the educational process to the political sphere becomes an opening to more actors outside of the cultural sphere. The political sphere may become entrapped by the interest of the powerful individuals of the day, and thus use its power to establish another ideal in the education system.

This period is characterised to what Koliba (2013) refers as the “classical system view of managing represented in Figure 2. Figure 3 provides a representation of the final state of the relationship between the social spheres adapted from figure 1. As it can be seen, all the inputs to the cultural sphere are controlled by the political sphere, hence, the “total” absorption of the cultural sphere in the political sphere. The outputs are to be managed by the direct control of the political sphere over the schools.

4.1.2 The control of education for the market (Second-half of 20th century until 21st century)

The second period of large education reforms can be seen to start in the 1960s when the rise of influence of U.S.A economic thoughts and ideals spread to Europe through the Marshall Plan which led to the rise of institutions that influenced the development of education policies in the Western World that connected education with economic growth (Elfert 2019). At this moment, the actions of philanthropic foundations become clear in the shaping of education. It has been argued that there has been an academic blind spot on the role of philanthropic foundations in the history America (Zunz 2016). In education, their role has become clearer since the last half of the 20th century. The Ford Foundation, the largest philanthropic foundation at the time, funded plenty of initiatives that promoted and “scientifically” defended the idea of strengthening the development of education systems to connect with economic growth (Elfert 2019). This is another example on how a para-political sphere based on a novel idea aims to re-design the education system to their views and aims of life. In this period, the para-political sphere is made by the strong interaction between philanthropic foundations and political ideas (Olmedo 2016). More critically, this para-political sphere works as a conversion of economic power into political power. Due to this, it allows for the circumvention of the role of the cultural sphere in the political process, and moreover, it provides a larger influence on the cultural sphere by the ideas supported by the owners of capital in the economic sphere.

The intersection of education and economic growth is through human capital formation theory which is at the centre of neoliberal policies. The latter states that education and training are to be seen as investments that can add to the growth of productivity²². These neoliberal policies were born in the U.S.A. and were promoted through the creation of global institutions, with philanthropic support, that aimed to promote economic growth such as the OECD (Elfert 2019). However, due to diverging institutional context, these neoliberal policies were embodied in different ways in different countries as the ideal was formed in the U.S.A. (Karsten 1999; Møller and Skedsmo 2013).

The resulting neoliberal policies aim to increasing the effectiveness of education through market-based reforms (Biesta 2009). These policies, coined as the “Global Education Reform Movement” (GERM), propose to achieve this result by (1) increasing competition between schools, which is the basis on the provision of higher autonomy to schools; (2) a rise of school inspections based on accountability and measurement of effectiveness; (3) the rise of standardized testing of students; and (4) the evaluation of teacher effectiveness (Sahlberg 2012). A fundamental aspect of neoliberal policies is that it connects autonomy with accountability as exemplified by:

“Not least, the more flexibility there is in the school system, the stronger public policy needs to be. While greater school autonomy, decentralization and a more

²² In line with the discussion on Capital in Chapter 2, human capital is one of the types of the neoclassical perspective of intangible capital.

demand-driven school system seek to devolve decision making to the frontline, central authorities need to maintain a strategic vision and clear guidelines for education, and offer meaningful feedback to local school networks and individual schools. In other words, only through a concerted effort by central and local education authorities will school choice benefit of all students.” (OECD 2017:3)

However, this perspective of the autonomy of the school connected with external accountability defined by central authorities contrasts to Kuyper’s ideal of *self-government* and *voluntary association*. How can the call for higher autonomy and higher accountability be framed together? The neoliberal perspective of autonomy is clearly limited compared to Kuyper’s. Neeleman (2019) classified through a survey to school’s administrators and ‘school leaders’ 16 different sub-domains of potential school interventions²³. This leads for space for there to be different political results of what school autonomy entitles in different countries. For the purpose of the thesis, the total of the school autonomy will be divided in two: organizational autonomy and educational autonomy. Organizational autonomy refers to all the decisions concerning the organizational structure of the school, over staff selection, and lastly, the source and use of finances. Educational autonomy refers to the independence of the school in defining their own curriculum, their own quality measures, their didactics, and their pedagogies. Organization and educational autonomy clearly are related as decisions over the definition of the purpose of education (the curriculum) will define organizational decisions and may be seen as contradictory to have one and not the other. Nonetheless, this framing seems consistent with the new governance theories that rely on quasi-markets such as *New Public Management*, *Network Governance* that arise in this period. One of the most important underpinning theoretical basis to understand this framing is the *principal-agent theory of organizations* (Enders, de Boer, and Weyer 2013; Torfing and Sørensen 2014). In the frame of education systems, the principal-agent theory defines the principal as the government and the agent are the institutions that provide education (schools) (Enders et al. 2013; the citation deals with higher education, thus in its case, the agents are universities) and the aim is to create set of incentives that align the goals of the agent with the principal. Therefore, as it will be shown, organizational autonomy is provided only for the schools to adapt to the incentives built for a curriculum established by the government. Hence, the **neoliberal autonomy refers to a diminished version of autonomy as organizational autonomy**. The opening of organizational autonomy, especially of a provision of higher autonomy to define the sources of funding, leads to the entrance of more powerful actors in education which complicates freedom of education.

Through these new views on governance, the government changes from being a controller of input to a controller of output of education (Karsten 1999). The change of the role of government is visualized through the differences between Figure 4 and 5 (Redrawn from Koliba (2013)).

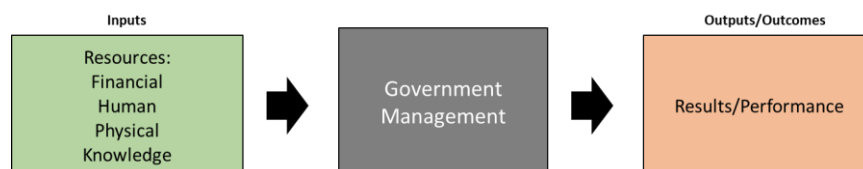


Figure 4. "Classical System View of Managing for Results" (Koliba 2013:89).

²³ Neeleman groups the school interventions as ‘Educational’, ‘Organizational’, and ‘Staff’ interventions (Neeleman 2019).

4.1.3 The Charter Movement in the U.S.A

In the U.S.A, the neoliberal policies embodied the whole scope of discussions of school choice, accountability of schools and teachers for the increase of attainment, and the inclusion of the profit-motive for the sake of market efficiency (Horvath and Powell 2016). The first focus was on the increase of school choice through the voucher program. The core idea of the voucher program is generally attributed to the proposal of Milton Friedman (1955) where he would critique the control of state governments over public education but still saw a necessary role of it²⁴.

Around the 1980s, the core of the debate on freedom of education was still of religious character. Catholic parents wanted the creation of voucher programs and for Catholic schools to be able to obtain them. After a ruling on the U.S.A Supreme Court, the voucher system was deemed legal. After its approval, two-thirds of the vouchers were used for the enrolment in Catholic Schools (Ravitch 2010). The latter would result in a similar result as in the Dutch School Struggle, however, due to the structure of shared financing of education between the local, state, and federal in the U.S.A its adoption was lagged due to needed changes of laws in all these levels. However, the potential for freedom of education of the voucher system became affected by the invention of a new type of school: charter schools and its accompanied rise of state accountability.

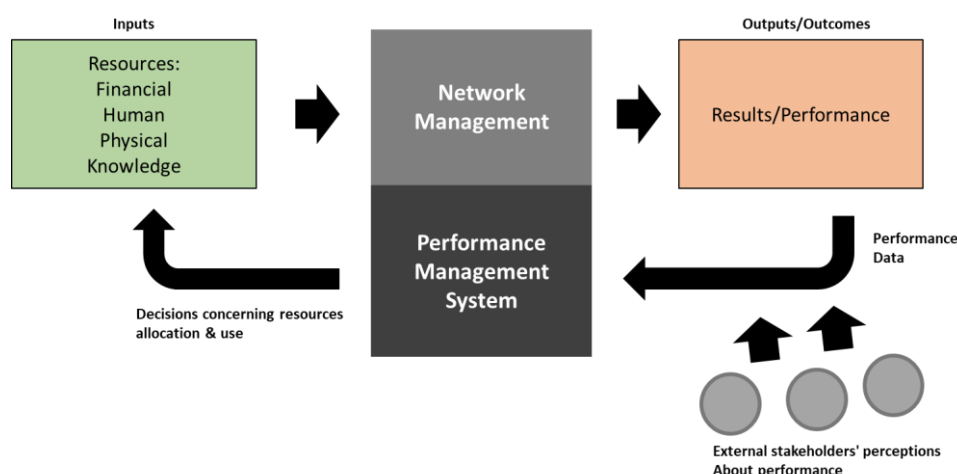


Figure 5. "Network View of Managing Performance" (Koliba 2013:91).

In terms of the education system, Network Management: the system that manages the schools (school network, local school boards...), Performance Management system: The political sphere through its government institutions

Originally, the charter schools were proposed by Ray Budde around the 1980s as schools that "could be run by a collective of teachers who could apply to run schools within districts" (McGoey 2015). Another proponent was Albert Shanker, who co-authored the acclaimed *Nation at Risk* report which stated the dire state of the U.S.A. educational system in the 1970s-80s (United States. National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983), proposed that at least 6 professors or more should be able to create a school. The original charter ideal,

²⁴ As a great example of the neoliberal perspective of education, he argued that the state may interfere in three situations: (1) the presence of a natural monopoly, (2) the presence of neighborhood effects, and (3) due to the paternalistic concern of children which requires an introduction to a "common set of values, and a minimum degree of literacy and knowledge" (Laitsch 2016).

in the view of Albert Shanker, was that charter schools would be an important institution for the support of experimentation in education, and more importantly, the sharing of knowledge and resources between schools (Ravitch 2010). However, the charter school turned something else as they were being implemented. Albert Shanker and Ray Budde retired their support in 1993 of the charter schools as “new businesses” jumped into the “education industry” (McGoey 2015; Ravitch 2010). The vision that dominated the charter schools in the education industry was of competition not of collaboration as new business actors would “do their own thing”, going against the ideal of “sharing knowledge and resources”. Charter schools became a method on how private interest could enter the education system as charter schools were given higher organizational autonomy than government schools. However, the amount of curriculum autonomy was still low or non-existence. In Arizona, a state of the U.S.A, charter school laws require schools to adhere to state curricular standards (O’Brien 2001). Moreover, the more controversial the topic, such as sex education, the more strictly it seems to be regulated through more specific curricular standards. Most state governments provide the same amount of funding per pupil to charter school than public schools, and they may be sponsored by a group of teachers, a corporation, community members, or parents (O’Brien 2001:22-23). In the frame of the thesis, charter schools have more organizational autonomy than a public school. Nonetheless, they don’t have educational autonomy. Students were allowed to choose between charter and public schools as to increase “choice”. Nonetheless, the curriculum is still the curriculum of the state.

The effects of the charter schools were underwhelming. The increase of effectiveness compared to public schools is controversial at best and may extent from institutional advantages rather than actually improving the education process (McGoey 2015; Ravitch 2010). One of the institutional advantages that charter schools have over public schools as they have increased resources (mainly from support of philanthro-capitalist foundations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) and the potential to reject students low-performing students and send them back to public schools (McGoey 2015). Another issue was that charter were used as ‘easy-cash’ machines. Charter schools can be non-profit or for-profit, nevertheless, non-profits may be managed by for-profit corporations (Geene 2021). Non-profit charters can receive philanthropic donations, meanwhile, public schools cannot. Even more, in the U.S.A there has been the development of Online Charters which has been accused of charging money to the states regardless of the usage of the software (McGoey 2015). In Arizona, the state with the least regulation concerning charter schools, it is estimated that 77% of the charter schools have ‘rigged’ finances for profit-making advantages (Glass and Berliner 2020). Regardless of these complications, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has helped with million-dollar grants to establish companies such as Pearson and Microsoft (which are for-profit) as education technology giants which are to profit from the “for-profit bonanza” (McGoey 2015:126). The Bill & Melinda Gates has amply supported the charter movement (AU and Lubinski 2016). This a clear example in which not only the economic sphere not only wants to frame education for their benefit, they also want to obtain direct profits from the cultural sphere.

The large influence of the para-political sphere comes with the pressure to make education more efficient. As efficiency is an instrumental variable, it always need to be accompanied with the answers to “efficient for what?” (Biesta 2009). One of the largest frames of education by the para-political sphere is to close the “skill-gap” between the porivsion of skills in education and those needed in the labour market (Mirrlees and Alvi 2019). In this new context, effectiveness is seen as the capacity of the education system to provide the skills needed in the labour market or to follow to higher education for more human capital formation. This is clear by how the largest philanthropy evaluate their investment: The Bill &

Melinda Gates Foundation, in one of their projects which reached around 800 thousand students, decided to close the project due to unappealing increases in the acceptance rates to college (McGoey 2015:116, 127).

This convolution of ideals of education becomes critical in the next stages of neoliberal reforms: the establishment of standards and standardized testing based on the latter. These two with the charter application process are seen by O'Brien (2001) as the of the three core impediments for "curricular flexibility" (curricular autonomy). As charter schools don't provide higher curricular autonomy as private education, the establishment of standards becomes a political struggle for the control of the curriculum. As O'Brien (2001) citing Kliebard (1992:xii-xiii) states: "And, like a building project that is directed by multiple owners, the curriculum reflects value choices, but it does not necessarily reflect the values of all the owners"²⁵. The core issue is that there is but one curriculum while a large number of worldviews with their own values.

There are two educational policies in the U.S.A that embody the neoliberal aims to "choice" and "accountability": "No Child Left Behind" and "Race To The Top" which (1) strengthen the role of the government as provider of standards by increasing the used of standardized testing, and (3) incentivized the formation of charter schools. Federal funding was conditioned based on standardized testing on skill-based subjects on the hope of raising economic competitiveness (Ravitch 2010:29). These tests were in reading and mathematical skills. Through the inclusion of this performance funding, so it goes, schools would reduce bureaucracy and lead to an increase of innovation in education. The reduction of bureaucracy was also seen as necessary for the implementation of (top-down) reforms. Many changes were made to schools to behave more business-like. Philanthropic investments (around 75 million USD) were used in the training of principals to adopt more hierarchical structure, which led parents feeling that their influence was minimal (Ravitch 2010:72). The Bill & Melinda Gates foundation supported policies that would make professors to be easier to fire and hire (as to increase flexibility) and, with investments of hundreds of millions of dollars, the tracking of the use of "value-added modelling" (VAM) for the evaluation and ranking of professors (McGoey 2015). Performance funding was not only for the school, but also for the teachers. The idea was that low-performing professors should be easy to fire and hire new ones.

As the federal government can't establish a national curriculum since 1965 (Evers 2000)²⁶, No Child Left Behind conditioned the funding to create their own tests, adopt three performance levels, and to define proficiency. If a school would be classified "in need of improvement" by not obtaining certain gains on student proficiency (i.e., increasing the percentage of students that are advanced in reading skills by 10% per year). If the schools classified as "in need of improvement" by several years in a row, they were forced to re-

²⁵ An illustrative example is in Kansas on a struggle on whether schools should teach creationism or evolutionism. This is clearly exemplified by the fight on whether schools should teach creationism or evolutionism. In the 1990s, a group of parents wanted to stop schools from being forced to teach evolutionism, hence, their struggle finally succeeded when they manage to exclude it as a topic of evaluation in the state's exam (Anderson 2000).

²⁶ One of the reasons for this is the tenth amendment of the U.S.A. constitution that states: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." Education is not directly mentioned in the U.S.A. constitution, however, there is another constitutional provision which allows the federal government to enact legislation on education if it is in the pursuit of the "general welfare", it relates to particular national projects or programs, and the federal government is unambiguous in "describing the conditions of the states' receipt of federal funds, to enable state to knowingly decide to participate or not" (FindLaw 2016).

structure. They could either turn *charter*, replace principal and staff, relinquish control to private management, or turn over control of the school to the state (Ravitch 2010:97). The results of the policies were unsatisfactory. Due to the high pressure to obtain the funding as schools are not well funded, the state lowered the standards for the ranking of proficiency as to create better statistics (Ravitch 2010:106) and thus obtain federal funding. Race To The Top continue the trend from No Child Left Behind. In 2009, after the financial crisis which led to governments to cut their budget for education, the federal government was to insert 4 billion USD to U.S.A. schools (The White House n.d.). However, there was a catch, state governments needed to apply for the grant and to demonstrate desire and then implement certain education reform. One of the core characteristics was for states to allow for students' scores to determine a teacher's effectiveness (McGoey 2015). The application had questions such as "Does your state have policies that prohibit the linkage and/or usage of student achievement data in teacher evaluations?" and "does that state grant teacher tenure in fewer than three years?" (McGoey 2015). To the latter, the answer should be no for the state to obtain funding. The Bill & Melinda Gates foundation presented itself as a consultant for the states that wanted to apply (McGoey 2015).

These two policies provide a clear example on how Figure 5 works on the favour of the para-political sphere. More specifically, as illustrated in Figure 6, the lack of significant funding in schools forces them to accept more accountability measures from the political or the para-political sphere as to continue to provide their services.

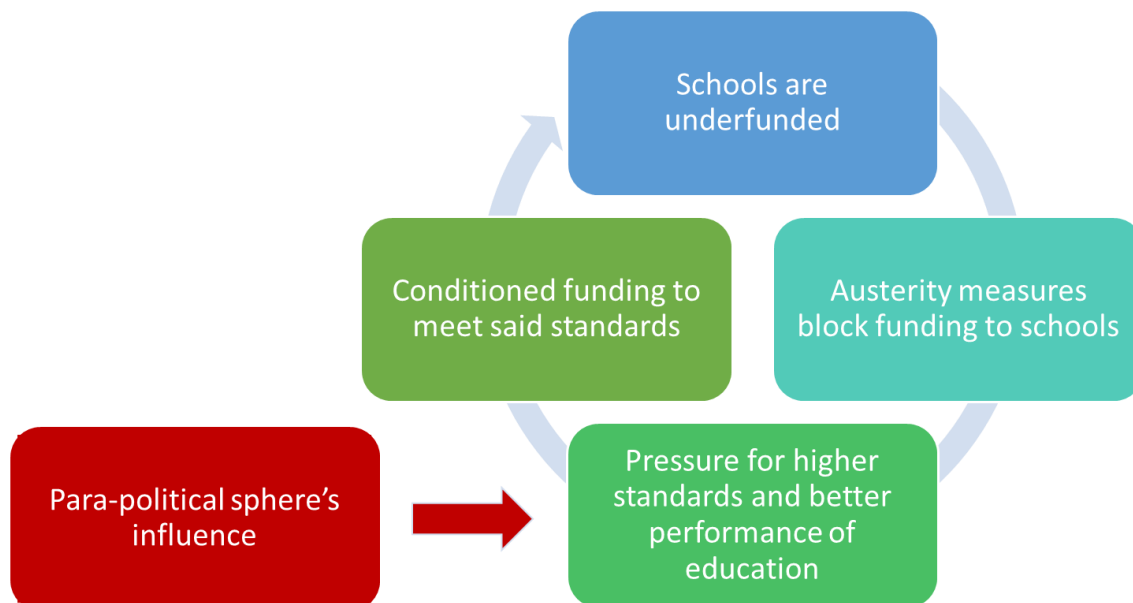


Figure 6. Process for introducing external accountability through new financial pressures.

Critically to the rhetoric of school autonomy and the rise of competition that is to arise from the neoliberal reforms, due to the higher pressure of performance funding school's curriculum lost its diversity by reducing or eliminating the potential for students to take electives or liberal arts lectures. The percentage of classes in reading and mathematics increased substantially to the dismay of students (Ravitch 2010:107). Even the fact that schools were evaluated through testing would conflict with some schools' pedagogical view. For example, a Montessori school turned charter (from being a private school) saw that they needed to adapt to a pedagogical view that was against their own just to increase their "achievement" in the standardized testing (O'Brien 2001:36). Furthermore, rise in schools

test were illusory as the change of school environment led to higher dropout of low-performing students (Ravitch 2010:96). The use of high stakes²⁷ standardized testing has been shown to have clear influence on the curriculum (Au 2007) and on the pedagogies that the school employs (Jürges et al. 2012) in other contexts.

The imposition of high-stakes testing has been also connected to a new role of the government, this new neoliberal states intends to provide the potential for standardization (Rasco 2020). Standardization is essential in the creation of economic profits and economies of scale. Furthermore, these standards become more in line with needs of the economic sphere. In a direct and indirect way, the creation of standards provide benefit to the economic sphere. Standardization, which is inspired by the *modus operandi* of the economic sphere as to obtain higher output is heavily incompatible with negative freedom in the cultural sphere. The increasing focus on metrics, either through standardized testing or VAM (teacher's value-added measurement), is both a consequence of novel technologies and support new industries which digital technologies can flourish (Mirrlees and Alvi 2019; Selwyn 2016). However, it also embodies a “managerial mindset that believes that every variable in a child's education can be identified, captures, measured, and evaluated with precision” (Ravitch 2010). Even more critically is how much influence can performance funding have in the content of schools in a country where is illegal to have a national curriculum. The conditioning of needed funding by the schools to the establishment of standards, and especially a singular set of standards, allows for the U.S.A federal government to start to partake on the role of educator which was never explicitly given or is even constitutionally prohibited. The negative freedom for the schools, as core members of the cultural sphere, to create the education that they see fit is heavily impeded.

4.1.4 Neoliberal education in the Netherlands

For this section, I base my overview of the neoliberal reforms in the Netherlands until 1999 by the work of Sjoerd Karsten (1999). The section summarizes his work to the relevant information to the thesis and complements with effects of reforms in the 21st century. To recount and specify the role of the government in education after the Dutch School Struggle, the government became the core “educator” in the country, however, it had to fund equally private and government-controlled (public) education. The government was to be the overseer of educational quality that would define the minimum qualitative standards to receive funding from the state. The qualitative standards were established by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and whether these were met or not was defined by the Dutch Inspection of Education (Luijkx and de Heus 2008:47). This role is embodied, for example, in the Primary Education Act and the Secondary Act that define the qualitative curriculum and the structure of the Dutch education system (There are other Acts that are related to ‘quality’ or ‘good governance’)²⁸. The positive development for freedom of education was that the government, in its role as educator, would be wary to not force anyone into a worldview they didn't agree with.

After 1917, the culmination of the Dutch School Struggle, there were three core consequences on the Dutch education system (Karsten 1999): privatization, which led to education pillarization as most members of society tended to stay inside a single religious

²⁷ A test is ‘high stakes’ when it has direct consequences to the funding of the school and/or teachers, or it may define a critical event to a student's life (such as which school or university they are allowed to attend depending on the performance of the test).

²⁸ The Acts related to education in the Netherlands can be seen in (European Commission 2022): https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/legislation-47_en

institution throughout life; Centralization, as municipal councils lost their power on education decision and disputes were taken by the central government; Corporatism, a rise of the “educational-political complex” (Tromp 1993 cited in Karsten 1999) due to the government lack of direct involvement with the schools for policy-making. The rise of corporatism is seen as a setback to the desire of autonomy in the Dutch School Struggle since the actors of these complex monopolize the debate on educational politics and exclude those who teach (Karsten 1999:305-306).

The neoliberal reforms started around the second-half of the 1980s (Karsten 1998:395). These reforms created a shift to focus more on pupil’s performance which provides the basis for the interventions of the Dutch government. Even so, the centre of the discussion was mainly about the administration of education and not its content until the late 1990s (Waslander 2010). Parents desired more autonomy on the control of the expenditures of the schools as the welfare state was the controller of the “inputs” of school (organizational autonomy). At the same time, educational actors “became increasingly anxious due to the uncertainty and the risks surrounding the issue [the desire of the government to de-regulate and spend less]” and wanted to have more guarantees (Karsten 1999:308). This is an interesting aspect of education reforms on how education actors’ anxiety led dismiss potential gains in educational autonomy. The lack of a vision of what was to replace the space that the government was going to leave behind led to the continuance of the role of the political sphere as educator. It can be said that due to the lack of negative freedom in the cultural sphere, it hadn’t developed the capacities for it to be independent (or the confidence).

Due to the lag of the state to establish itself as the controller of quality, there was the creation of a ‘twilight zone’ which aimed to support governors and schools in their administrative tasks (Karsten 1999:310). This twilight zone is the educational-political complex which these consultant bodies created an internal quality control industry which promoted the use of quality systems derived from business models such as pupil monitoring systems and total quality management which are only partially valid for education. These systems promote uniformity, bureaucratic regulations, and routine methods of work (Karsten 1999:314). The complex structure of quality control between schools and central government led to question how much autonomy education institutions really obtaining from the reforms (Karsten 1998). Ultimately, the government was able to provide external quality control from which quality charts were created. These are criticized by the schools on the basis that “you cannot express how well schools function by means of a few statistics” (Karsten 1999). The Dutch government lack of use performance funding schemes²⁹ as were used in the U.S.A. lasted until 2009 (Waslander 2010). The latter introduced more precise quantitative minimum requirements to schools for their eligibility for public funding (Waslander 2010:402) (There was already a qualitative curriculum). The rationality was that the government “can guarantee basic quality education, as required by national and international law” and that “the quality of education is at stake, that a bottom line is required, and that this bottom line requires a legal status” (Waslander 2010:403). and that “the quality of education is at stake, that a bottom line is required, and that this bottom line requires a legal status” (Waslander 2010:403). The introduction of performance funding was through the achievement of minimum standards in Dutch language and mathematics for primary schools, and for secondary schools on Dutch, English, and mathematics (Waslander 2010:403). Schools are compared to other with similar

²⁹ It can be argued that the creation of rankings for the purpose of informing parents’ choices is a form of performance funding. However, performance funding will be reduced to the direct imposition of financial or organizational incentives or disincentives from the political sphere in the base of any measurement of performance.

student composition. If a school's average is below the average of other similar schools, it has the potential to lose their government funding. The potential becomes real after an evaluation of the learning process from the national inspectorate and the ability for the school to make and execute an improvement plan. The effects of performance funding through high-stakes testing can be expected to be similar to those in the charter movement in the U.S.

Interestingly for the apparent gain of freedom of education at the end of the Dutch School Struggle, the push for government intervention comes from a decade of discussion concerning the rise of the "Iederwijs" and "new learning" methodologies which provided high degrees of autonomy to students. The boards and managers of the schools that initiated these educational innovations were criticized of declining education standards. Therefore, the government intervened as extending control to all schools, even if the issue was mainly with "Iederwijs" schools (Waslander 2010:414). Therefore, true educational autonomy which is essential for freedom of education was not safeguarded. The only aspect of education that seems to be safeguarded is religion as it was recently change that a non-governmental school doesn't need their worldview recognized by the Education Council³⁰. Before, for schools to obtain funding, non-governmental schools only managed to secure funding from the government if "they represented a recognised (*erkende*) religious conviction or ideology (*richting*) with a significant impact on Dutch Society (Franken and Bertram-Troost 2021:9)³¹. In 2021, a law came into action where the establishment of new schools was on the basis of "the interest of parents and students, rather than on the basis of the state's recognition of a particular religion/worldview" (Franken and Bertram-Troost 2021:10). A positive development for freedom of education as defined in this thesis but only for a small section of the curriculum.

The manner through which the government influences education can be framed as network governance, especially of the educational-political complex. The government uses strategies such as (Hooge, Waslander, and Theisens 2021): (1) network design, by creating new actors or re-arranging other actors, and influence their roles and tasks; (2) resourcing strategies, through which provides/withholds actors with fund for generic or specific purpose, may enable or disable actors through regulations or laws, and grants knowledge and authority to some actors; (3) framing strategies, to influence the perception and sensemaking of actors; and (4) the creation of key nodes/actors in the network. The most direct use of funding for the promotion of policy is through project funding by which aims to demonstrate the effects of their proposed policies. Philanthropic foundations tend to be involved in the execution and creation of these project to demonstrate their utility. In the case of the implementation of the policy "school as learning organizations", the foundation LeerKRACHT was said to have a greatly influential position for its no-ties position in the network (Waslander, Hooge, and Drewes 2016). "It has no direct financial ties with the Ministry, is very well connected to central actors in the network and has a high public profile"³² (Waslander et al. 2016:487).

³⁰ In the Netherlands, the Education Council "is an independent governmental advisory body which advises the Minister, Parliament and local authorities. The Council provides advice, both solicited and unsolicited, to the Minister of Education, Sciences and Cultural Affairs and the Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality. Moreover, the Council may be asked for advice by the Dutch upper and lower chambers of parliament. Local authorities can call on the Education Council in special cases of local education policy." (European Network of Education Councils (EUNEC) n.d.)

³¹ An application to establish a Buddhist school was rejected by the Education Council as Buddhism was considered "a marginal phenomenon in Dutch society and because it was, according to the Council, not clear whether there would be sufficient pupils for such a school" (Franken and Bertram-Troost 2021:10).

³² The founder of LeerKRACHT, Jaap Versfelt, was a former senior partner in McKinsey (Chen, Dorn, and Rutten 2020) which would provide the opportunity to create such high level connections.

Therefore, in the process of influence from the Dutch government, other influential actors shape the policy that is aimed to be established by the local school boards (which have the control over multiple schools). The connection of the para-political sphere with the political sphere seems more obscure in the Netherlands. However, this meta-governance process continuously excludes the primary stakeholders of education for the purpose of applying a particular view of how education should be executed. For example, the involvement of teachers in the creation and selection of pedagogies is low as “Educational publisher - market parties - gained quite a dominant position in the educational field. They develop high quality methods that are elaborate and prescriptive. An upside is that the methods provide schools with a solid and reliable base to fall back on; a downside is that they might narrow down the role of teachers in a pedagogical sense” (Frankowski et al. 2018:34)³³. This is an example on how decentralization of power from the political sphere doesn’t necessarily lead to a safeguarding of the negative freedom of the cultural sphere. Nonetheless, the complicated relationships in the educational-political complex may have also excluded para-political actors from a higher capture of the educational system as the political sphere in the Netherlands also behave as having its own goals.

Lastly, another example on how higher organizational autonomy doesn’t lead to greater school autonomy is that these neoliberal reforms also seem to generate an increased concentration of the management of schools. There are several boards that act as governing bodies of more than 35 schools due to higher financial risk (Waslander 2010:405). Moreover, the regulations on the minimum requirements for opening schools may create a barrier which new ideas may need to associate with already existing organizations for funding (Franken and Bertram-Troost 2021) which could lead to higher concentration. Therefore, the responsibility of the school on their own financial stability, which comes with higher organizational autonomy, opens them to be capture by other organizations.

The continuous effort of the Dutch government to establish standards and to use meta-governance strategies comes from the influence and the perceived need for a government to secure the quality of education. Due to the political sphere having a large bulk of the funds in the educational-political complex, it may use funding as to capture the network to its goals. This method of governance opens education to the Dutch para-political sphere and external actors.

This period of educational reform demonstrate that the result of the Dutch School Struggle was far from the ideal of freedom of education, even for religious education. Until 2021 was possible to establish schools without the need of ‘ideological’ or ‘religious’ recognition of the government. Moreover, the use of meta-governance still aims to shape the different realities in education and to potentially homogenize them. The educational-political complex also aims to take advantage of government initiatives and its “continuous concern” to establish their own ideal. Therefore, the negative freedom of the cultural sphere must be constantly protected and reiterated. This is not an ideal scenario if this negative freedom in the cultural sphere is to be safeguarded.

The structure of the Dutch education system is clearly complex. One last actor that need to be mentioned are the local school boards. From the educational-political complex, the local school boards are the only ones represented in it, and these are the ones with the task of

³³ The quote ends by stating that “This does not necessarily lead to worse outcomes, but could affect teacher professionalism.” It is important to note that the reference is an OECD working paper. The OECD is mainly concerned with the increase on achievement (especially achievement in the neoliberal sense) and not in freedom of education.

“translating learning objectives” from the government into the learning plans that the schools need to abide rather than the schools themselves (Frankowski et al. 2018). Therefore, the local school boards are the ones that have the core power to define what happens in the school. The structure of the Dutch education system largely provides the existent, even in low levels, of autonomy (organizational autonomy) to these school boards. Freedom of education is meant for the core actors of the education process, meaning students (and parents when the student has not developed autonomy) and teachers.

For Tromp, the educational-political complex is the main cause for changes in educations that neither “education consumers (parents and students) nor the education producers (teachers)” have asked for (Bart Tromp 1993). Tromp concludes in 1993 that “Although the cultural revolution in Dutch education has been going on for almost thirty years, the end does not seem to be in sight.”

4.1.5 The Globalization of the Education Industry

The last relevant scope to discuss the influence of the para-political sphere is at the global level. The Global Education Reform Movement (GERM) is the cross-national effort to create curricula that are standardized to fit international tests. To reach this objective, students around the world are to be taught with learning material from global providers (Sahlberg 2012). GERM embodies the full scope of aims of the neoliberal reforms. Moreover, they are more heavily involved in the shaping of the discourse on how efficiency should be defined in education. The World Economic Forum (WEF) report of Schools of the Future and the proposed skills for the 21st century is clear example of the discussion on a vague and general skillset with the addition of the specific need of “technology skills” and a “globalized mindset” (World Economic Forum 2020). Skills as “complex problem-solving” or “cooperation”³⁴ are clearly important for an individual’s life, however, what type of problems should the individual solve, what should be critiqued, and how they should be solved and critiqued, should be part of the individual’s freedom to pursue their own aims. The modern global para-political sphere in education, shaped mainly through the OECD and various philanthropic foundations (Verger, Lubienski, and Steiner-Khamsi 2016). The example of Norway provides a window to the real intentions of these movement as they promote the importance not only for the use of standardized testing but of the PISA test (which are seen as basic skills for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics [STEM]). In a way, the para-political sphere says that if the individual can minimally serve the needs of the market (which is currently dominated by technology companies that highly benefit from STEM skills, then they are allowed to have freedom for other things.

As has been seen in the Netherlands and the U.S.A., the disruption caused by the GERM is large in the school systems. The introduction of performance funding heavily changes the curriculum of schools while alienates the students, teachers, parents, and school administrators (Sahlberg 2012) from a process that concern greatly the development of human beings. In later years the OECD has intended to expand the quantity and diversity of skills that they measure, however, even if they are to measure and promote their standardized testing worldwide, the local disconnect with the school and the community built around education would remain. In the Netherlands, which has presented an exit exam for the

³⁴ The WEF’s School of the Future report (2020) lists 8 characteristics that “define high-quality learning in the Fourth Industrial Revolution – ‘Education 4.0’”: (1) Global citizenship skills, (2) Innovation and creativity skills, (3) Technology skills, (4) Interpersonal skills, (5) Personalized and self-paced learning, (6) Accessible and inclusive learning, (7) Problem-based and collaborative learning, and (8) Lifelong and student-driven learning.

classification of primary school students into different education paths (with high potential effects in the socioeconomic position of the student in the future), has lowered the importance of this test while increasing the importance of pupil monitoring systems (the continuous evaluation of students through standardized testing throughout their student life) (van Aert 2021). As discussed before, just the presence of mandatory standardize high-stakes testing creates pedagogical influences in the school. This coincides with the rise of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as these types of systems are highly compatible to be provided by corporations that develop these technologies. Therefore, by imposition of the political sphere, the pedagogical decisions of the education system become more aligned to profit-making activities which the primary actors of the schools didn't ask for or could even be against to.

ICT fits at the centre of the neoliberal rhetoric around education. It is seen with great desire for disruption of modern education process for the sake of rising the efficiency of a societal sector that is seen as too expensive (Mirrlees and Alvi 2019). Even when the desire of using technology in education comes from before the Digital Revolution (Lionni [1980] 2013; Mirrlees and Alvi 2019), the GERM has been used as a powerful platform to introduce technology in education with the purpose of closing the “skills-gap” (Mirrlees and Alvi 2019:52). The “skill-gap” is the term used for the difference between the demand of skills by corporations in the market, and the supply of skills from educational institutions. However, when revising the “issue” of the skill-gap, what is framed as a supply problem can also be defined as a demand problem. As Education institutions supply higher skills, “there can be a higher quality demand, therefore, increasing the skill-gap again” (Modestino, Shoag, and Ballance 2015). This is a clear perspective of technological solutionism which states that extensive use of technology is fundamental in education as to solve the lack of efficiency in providing these skills (Mirrlees and Alvi 2019:52). One of the proposed technological solutions is the expansion of use of Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs). MOOCs are positioned to be the solution for the “democratization” (as in expansion of educational services) of education, however, they present large inequalities in use between different socioeconomic groups largely differ (providing higher benefits to members of higher socio-economic) (Mirrlees and Alvi 2019:118; Selwyn 2016). Moreover, apart from the clear social inefficiencies of MOOCs, the continuous privatization of education through MOOCs (as the platforms are privately owned) would lead to yet another avenue of capture of educational institutions in search of more funds and higher “efficiency” that largely create the content³⁵ of said MOOCs. MOOCs are a great example of the type of education that the economic sphere prefers, not because it is beneficial for the development of intangible capital, but because it has the potential to create profit. The rise of MOOCs, and the continuous investment from the economic sphere due to their scalability, presents how the economic sphere is biased towards those pedagogies that are scalable due to potential for standardization. This is clearly against the ideal of freedom of education as it intends to fit most of the education system to a single pedagogy even if its content diversity may be high. Moreover, shows that the desire for profit and higher efficiency would clearly affect even the organizational autonomy of schools, that neoliberals have proposed as essential, as these types of technologies are increasingly pushed. The effect of education technologies on organizational autonomy also was shown in the Netherlands with the continuous use of pupil monitoring systems that locate the use of graded test as a fundamental aspect of all school's education (van Aert 2021). Thus, in terms of technology and freedom of education, the schools also need to have the freedom on how

³⁵ Universities, as the main providers of said content, are still mainly funded through public funds. However, through the use of MOOCs, platforms may create supra-profits through the creation of false scarcity of a good that is publicly funded (Mirrlees and Alvi 2019:76).

these technologies are incorporated to the curriculum and what values (not only efficiency) through their own autonomy.

4.1.6 Neoliberal reforms: freedom as unfreedom from economic values

At the beginning of this section, it was discussed how neoliberal ideals lead to a reduced and convenient perspective of school autonomy, namely, in this thesis, organizational autonomy. The increasing influence of economic values had led to multiple strategies to influence the education system to focus on them. This has involved the intent to influence of the political sphere, with its power to condition the largest bulk of educational funding, as to align the educational system to these educational values.

The main tactic for alignment of the educational system has been the definition of stricter quality standards. The establishment of these were heavily influenced by philanthropic foundations in the U.S.A and the educational-political complex in the Netherlands which first monopolist the discussion about what is important in education that then became embedded in performance funding.

The result of the neoliberal educational reforms clearly shows that only the design of funding of education is not to sufficient for and to safeguard freedom of education. Under the idea of neoliberal autonomy, these set of reforms have either reduced their freedom of education or maintained their unfreedom. The core change was the set of values that are to be imposed in the education system and the growth of the array of strategies through which they are implemented.

The relationship between these supra-national organizations and national governments can also be described as the “science-business-politics triangle” by Lankau (2017). It is represented in figure 7. It demonstrates how the three spheres interact when the para-political sphere is strong. The economic sphere provides funds to said sphere which in turn uses and influences the cultural sphere to obtain influence in the political sphere.

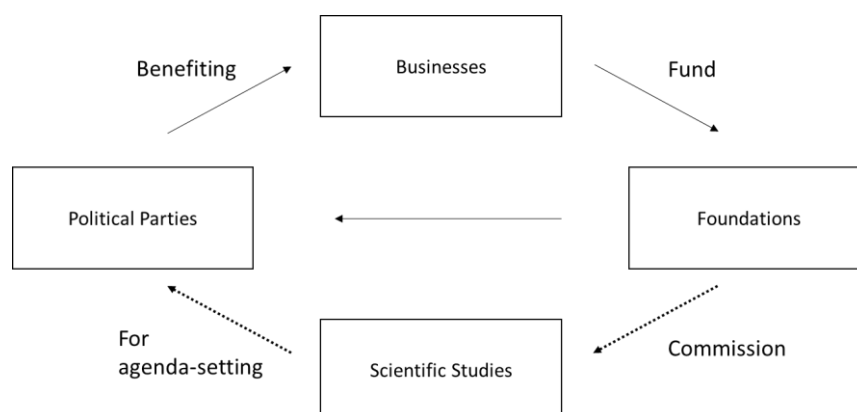


Figure 7. Agenda-setting via research foundations. Translated and adapted by Naastepad (2021:31) from Lankau (2017).

4.2 Comparing education reforms of the 19th-20th century to the ideal of freedom of education

Based on the investigation in Section 1 (“Ideas of education and their funding”), Section 2 aims to compare the ideal of Chapter 3 (“Human aspirations, freedom, and the social spheres”) to the educational reforms described in Section 1.

The two periods of reform have a common pattern: accountability and funding are intrinsically intertwined. At the first period, the political sphere locates itself as the centre of the education system with their control of the largest share of funding of the education system. Moreover, it may even prohibit the creation of parallel education institutions to those created by the state. The political sphere may open the education system to external influences by allowing schools to diversify their funding. This autonomy of schools to define their raise their own fund will be called *fundraising autonomy*, as a part of organizational autonomy. The funding from other actors is also connected to their own accountability measures which can't exceed the regulations of the political sphere.

At the centre of the issue is a narrow perspective of school autonomy as only organizational autonomy. It is critical that educational autonomy is re-integrated into the modern discussions of school autonomy, otherwise, freedom of education will never be achieved. This narrow perspective of school autonomy provides the basis for governments to establish minimum standards that have a clear goal to affect the workings of the school, and to use 'meta-governance' strategies such as the imposition of high stakes testing or performance funding. The para-political sphere may be opportunistic and pressure the political sphere to adopt their perspective of what is the aim of education. Moreover, in the Netherlands, the creation of the 'twilight zone' creates a web of accountability and restrictions that clearly don't allow for the real autonomy that schools need as discussed in Chapter 3. This emphasizes the clear need for the absence of involvement of the political sphere in the definition of quality but also the provision of adequate funding to schools as to truly be independent. Otherwise, there is danger for there to be a process of "network capture", specifically "elite capture"³⁶. The elites may be "policy elites" who are those "who managed the economy, who had privileged access to the media and to political official, who controlled foundations, who were educational leaders in the universities and in city and state superintendencies, and who redesigned and led organizations of many kinds" (O'Brien 2001:12). Through their use of resources, different actors aim to monopolize the educational reforms and, by default, exclude different perspectives from funding.

This process clearly demonstrates a continuous breach of the negative freedom of the cultural sphere. The creation of the para-political sphere as a lack of positive freedom, as being other-interested, and excessive negative freedom from actors of the economic sphere. Lastly, the use of Enlightenment freedom of the political sphere in the cultural sphere rather than in the economic sphere as to provide negative freedom to the former. Hence, a clear opposite to the ideal relationship between the social spheres for freedom of education. This non-ideal interaction between the social spheres is demonstrated in figure 8. This interaction misallocated the freedoms as the economic sphere becomes the sphere of negative freedom (The political sphere minimally regulates it). Moreover, this process is possible due to two core barriers for freedom of education: (a) the (constitutional) circumstances that entrusts the task to control the quality of education to the state (the political sphere as educator of society), and related the attachment of external conditions ('accountability') to the funding of schools; and (b) the influence exerted on the education from the economic sphere (corporations) and the para-political sphere (e.g., philanthropic foundations, a section of the cultural sphere funded by the rich partiers in the economic sphere). If these barriers are taken away the cultural sphere could, in principle, have autonomy as discussed in Chapter 3.

³⁶ The terms network capture and elite capture have been used in different contexts from educational reform, such as local governance (Rajasekhar, Babu, and Manjula 2018) and natural conservation networks (Bixler et al. 2016). They largely relate to the theory of network governance.

Ultimately, as the thesis aims to safeguard freedom of education, there are some principles that can be deduced that will be useful for Chapter 5 (designing an education system that supports freedom of education): (1) the political sphere is necessary for freedom of education as higher fundraising autonomy may lead to the entrapment of the education system by other actors; (2) there is a need for school community to fully take their roles of educator which entitles the establishment of their own internal quality standards based on their own curriculum; (3) Even though there is a relation between how the funding is setup and freedom of education, this is not a sufficient condition for total negative freedom from the political sphere. Figure 9 elaborates from the ideal allocation of freedoms between the social spheres in figure 3 (Chapter 3 Section 4) and adds on the ideal interaction between the sphere to overpass the barriers to freedom of education.

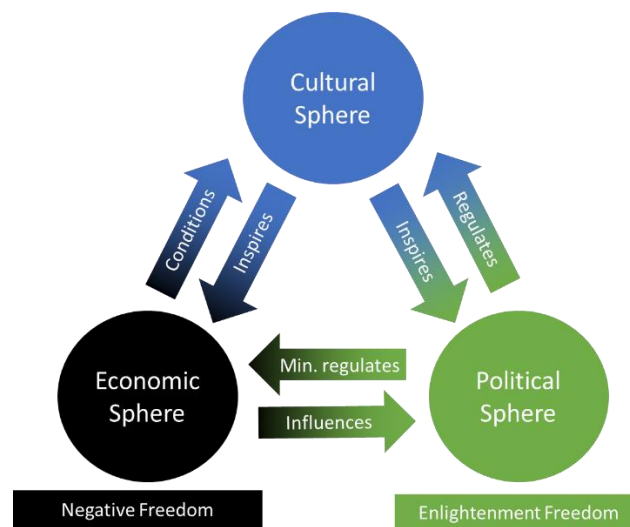


Figure 8. Current relationship between the spheres. Inspired on Findeli (2008:314)

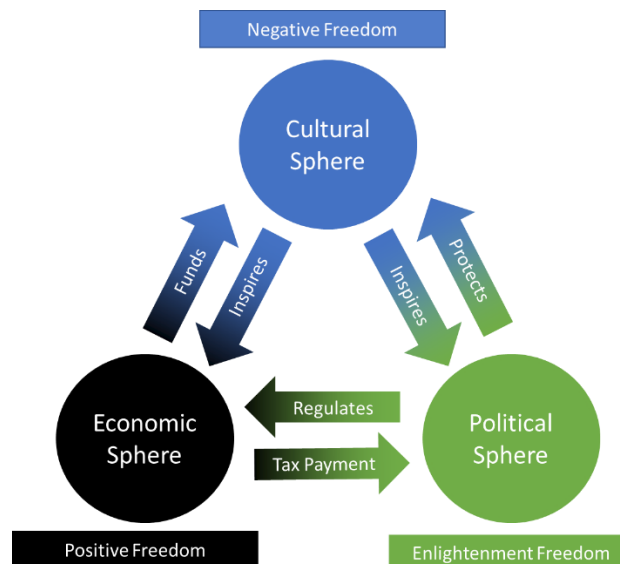


Figure 9. Ideal relationship between the spheres to safeguard freedom of education. Inspired on Findeli (2008:314)

4.3 Conclusions

The chapter goes broadly through two centuries of educational reform to understand the implication for freedom of education of conventional modes of funding education. The main

method of funding throughout the past two centuries has been through the centralized collection of funding and its distribution by the political sphere. The method for collecting and distributing funding has been various. For collection, there were (1) the use of rents of state-owned land and (2) tax-collection. The nature of the tax-collection is different between the Netherlands and the U.S.A. In the former, tax is collected by the national government. In the U.S.A, taxes are collected on the district, state, and federal level. The nature of tax-collection in the U.S.A may lead to high inequality of funding due to differences on the amount of taxes that may be collected on a district level. Therefore, as to not provide unequal opportunities for freedom of education, the collection and distribution of funds should be at the highest level of sovereignty. In most societies today this is the nation-state. When the political sphere is not involved in the collection of funds, the schools fundraise their funds (3) directly from the parents in the form of tuition fees. The latter is characteristic for schools which the government has not decided to support due to their different ideals of education. Another method is through the para-political (foundations) or the economic (corporations) sphere by providing (4) donations to schools. The latter, in the new era of philanthro-capitalism, is attached to accountability measures based on the ideals of the donor.

In the chapter is that the method of collection of funds is not related directly to the absence or availability of freedom of education. However, it is important for the establishment of the *right* of freedom of education. The less dependent is the funding of schools on the socioeconomic environment of its community, the better. On the other hand, the source of the funding may indirectly affect freedom of education through financial instability. With higher financial instability, schools tend to agglomerate or to accept external accountability for the sake of continuing operations. Therefore, the use of rents from government owned property can be seen as prejudicial if school autonomies are not safeguarded (i.e., through a law that prohibits the imposition of accountability by donors). Nonetheless, in the frame of Chapter 2, the use of rents provides an opportunity to re-direct freed capital directly to the educational system if there was, for example, a system that allowed schools to own assets and obtain rent from them. This could also allow for schools to be donated assets such as stocks that would circumvent the need of the political sphere. However, it may risk the creation of high inequality as in the current state of the U.S.A.

The core problem for freedom of education is not only the mode of funding but also the conditioning of funding by the political sphere and the para-political sphere. For example, a system of funding that allows for the student choice is essential for freedom of education. Nonetheless, if schools' autonomy is reduced by the political sphere as a condition for them to obtain said funding, then it is not sufficient. Therefore, when the cultural sphere is funded by the collection of the political sphere, it has risked its negative freedom in the cases in this thesis. The given power to the political sphere to establish quality conditions in the cultural sphere can be exploited by the economic sphere, through a para-political sphere, as to frame education for the purpose of economic values. The provision of higher fundraising autonomy to schools also opens the system to a "web" of accountability by all the providers of funding. Therefore, when the decisions of funding are trusted to the political sphere or the latter is influenced by the economic sphere, the negative freedom of the cultural sphere is infringed. This ultimately leads to unfreedom of education to those that matter: the teacher, students, and parents. The unfreedom of education may be imposed by prohibition of private education, the inability for students (or parents) to choose a school, the imposition of high stakes standardized testing, the imposition of a national curriculum, the establishment of

minimum standards in school staff, the recognition by the political sphere to open a school³⁷, or the conditioning of funding made available in “untypical” circumstances (such as a financial crisis). Specifically for market-based provision of education, where the economic sphere is allowed to create profit from the education system, there is the risk of lower organizational autonomy as not only curriculum but also pedagogies are to be modified to create scalability through standardization and the use of technology.

Ultimately, based on the reforms in Section 1 from this chapter (“Ideas of education and their funding”), a general process was defined for the continuous breach of freedom of education. From this process it was defined core barriers for freedom of education. Moreover, due to the risk of network capture from the economic sphere if schools are granted high fundraising autonomy, three points were made that seem necessary to *safeguard* of freedom of education which will be used in Chapter 5. Figure 9 presents the ideal interaction between the spheres as to have the correct allocation of freedoms for freedom of education.

³⁷ The freedom to open a school based on a worldview is sometimes referred as *active* freedom of education. *Passive* freedom of education is related to the potential of the student to choose.

5 An Educational System to Safeguard Freedom of Education

The aim of the chapter is to propose a mode of funding that would support and safeguard freedom of education. For this, the first section (“Recap of previous chapters”) will recapitulate the findings from previous chapters to answer the first and second sub-questions: “What does freedom of education require in terms of relationships between the social spheres?” and “What is the ideal mode of funding education if freedom of education is to be fully respected?”. The second section (“Modes of funding for freedom of education”) introduces five modes of funding which are proposed to increase freedom of education by increasing school choice. These are shortly discussed in relation to the ideal of freedom of education as presented in the thesis and the voucher system is introduced. The third section (“The voucher system”) delves deeper into the voucher system to answer the third and fourth sub-question “What is the potential of the voucher system (proposed in literature) to safeguard freedom of education?” and “According to the theoretical and empirical literature, what are the merits and demerits of the voucher system?”. While the merits and demerits are discussed, conditions are brought forward that are expected to solve problems found with the voucher system. The fourth section (“A voucher system to safeguard freedom of education”) shows all the conditions and aims to provide a voucher system that would safeguard freedom of education to answer the fourth sub-question “If the voucher system is found to suffer from problems, could it be improved to safeguard freedom of education?” and thus addresses the main question of the thesis.

5.1 Recap of previous chapters

In Chapter 2 it was explained the concept of the capital cycle in which freed capital that is produced in the economic sphere due to the use of intangible capital. Freed capital is the source of funding for the education system that will be proposed in this chapter. Freed capital is created when productivity gains are created. In the current economic and political context, freed capital is sometimes used to increase wages, or they are taxed away (as profit tax) by government. It will be assumed that the government collects freed capital that is to be used for education on behalf of society. Therefore, increasing wages to enable wage-earners to pay for education is not considered here initially³⁸. In Chapter 3, it was concluded that the ideal relationship between the spheres for the circulation of freed capital is one that respects the negative freedom of the cultural sphere. This requires that the economic sphere provide said freed capital through their positive freedom (their interest in others). The collection and re-distribution of freed capital is secured by the political sphere through their Enlightenment freedom. Lastly, Chapter 4 presented an undesirable allocation of freedoms between the social spheres. In the latest educational reforms, the economic sphere has been the sphere of negative freedom. This allowed it to influence the political sphere to use its capacity for Enlightenment freedom to shape the cultural sphere. The cultural sphere thus came to operate for the purpose of the negative freedom of the economic sphere. The resulting misallocation of freedoms, and thus lack of freedom of education, extends from two barriers: (a) the (constitutional) circumstances that entrust the task to control the quality of education to the

³⁸ This assumption is relaxed when a ‘laissez-faire’ mode of funding is discussed later in the chapter.

state (the political sphere as educator of society), and the related attachment of external conditions ('accountability') to the funding of schools; and (b) the influence exerted on the education from the economic sphere (corporations) and the para-political sphere (e.g., philanthropic foundations, a section of the cultural sphere funded by the rich parties in the economic sphere). An education system that would safeguard freedom of education would surpass these two barriers and have a compatible mode of funding. For the latter, it seems necessary that the political sphere involve itself in the protection of the right to freedom of education of each individual and re-establish the school community as educators by requesting the establishment of their own quality standards based on their internally defined curriculum and pedagogical ideas.

Freedom of education is for the student and for the teacher. Freedom of education for the teacher means the ability to freely create and propose different curriculums based on their own worldview or to join existing ones. Therefore, they have the responsibility to establish their own quality measures based on their own curriculum. Moreover, teacher communities around a worldview are also free to define the quality standards and the curriculum for the teachers themselves. For the student it means to select between all the proposed curriculums, which have their own quality standards defined by the teachers, and to receive funding regardless of their decision. In terms of Chapter 4, this requires complete educational autonomy. The only autonomy that may be restricted is fundraising autonomy, as part of organizational autonomy, due to the danger of members of the economic sphere to force their own quality measures and intent to influence the development of curriculums.

Under these set of conditions, the following section will compare different proposals for freedom of education that have been suggested in the struggle for it. Then it will delve deeper into the voucher system.

5.2 Modes of funding for freedom of education

The core of each of the modes of funding proposed under the struggle for freedom of education consist of the "money follows the student". The latter states that the schools that is funded is the one that the student chooses. The distinction between programs lies in how the money gets distributed and whether money is allowed to be given to schools that don't follow the national curriculum (explicit or implicit through minimum education quality standards). For the sake of simplicity, there will be three types of schools will be considered: (1) public schools, (2) semi-private schools, and (3) private schools. The public school are the schools without organizational and educational autonomy from the political sphere. Semi-private schools have more organizational autonomy than public schools as was discussed in Chapter 4 (as with charter schools or schools in the Netherlands that obtain government funding). They are privately managed schools that adhere to a large extent to the curriculum of the political sphere. Lastly, private schools are the schools are those that have both organizational and educational autonomy³⁹. The proposed funding systems in which the "money follows the student" are:

1. **Open enrolment**, in which a student may choose between any public or semi-private school given that they can cover transport and there are places available. The government directly channels the money to the school, and the schools need to prove that they abide to the minimum standards set by the political sphere.

³⁹ This schools could also be called "free schools." However, this term will be used for schools that truly safeguard and correctly positioned freedom of education on the student and the teachers which may not be achieved in private schools. The discussion on 'neo-vouchers' and 'laissez-faire' provides the reasoning.

2. **Voucher system**, in which a student may choose between public, semi-public, and private schools. In the case of private schools, the government is not involved in the definition of the curriculum nor in the definition of quality standards.
3. **Neoliberal voucher system**, in which a student may choose between public, semi-private, and private schools. In the case of private schools, the government is not involved in the definition of the curriculum. Nonetheless, the government has the duty to secure ‘minimum standards’ on behalf of society. The government may directly channel the money to the school that the student chooses or provide a ‘coupon’ to the student for their use⁴⁰.
4. **Neo-voucher system** (Welner 2008), in which individuals and private organizations may fund a *School Tuition Organization* (STOs) which then distributes the funds under their own discretion. STOs are non-profit organizations that raise funds in order to provide education grants to (eligible) pupils). The STOs provide funds to those schools that have the organizational autonomy to receive non-governmental funding (semi-private and private schools). The government provides a tax-credit to the individuals or private organizations that provide funds to the STOs.
5. **‘Laissez-faire’ system**, in which each student is responsible to find funds for themselves. The circulation of freed capital to the cultural sphere would depend on the dynamics of wages and individuals’ decisions. The only role of the government is to redistribute money under welfare laws; however, this money is not conditioned in its use. It is assumed that the political sphere is not involved in the definition of the curriculum, management of the school, or its funding.

The open enrolment system and the neoliberal voucher system often get confused. This is due to different perspectives that exist of the voucher system which I explicitly separate in the list. The core distinction between an open enrolment system and the neoliberal voucher system is on the role of the political sphere in the definition of the curriculum of the education system. The most popular conception of the voucher system, the neoliberal one, was popularized by Milton Friedman’s “The Role of Government in Education” (Friedman 1955) in which he states that “...Let the subsidy be made available to parents regardless where they send their children—provided only that it be to schools that satisfy specified minimum standards—and a wide variety of schools will spring up to meet the demand” (Friedman 1955:128). Even though Friedman saw that government intervention in education was not consistent with a free society, he also saw that it was necessary due to the presence of “neighbourhood effect.” In education, this would mean the establishment of minimum standards since the welfare of other people depend on the education of others, especially the welfare by “promoting a stable and democratic society” (Friedman 1955:126). Minimum standards were for the purpose of the continuance of a free society. In a less absolutist frame, Friedman continues on the perspective that as a minimum the government has to ensure a commonality that is necessary for ‘stability’ similar to the ideals that around the common school movement in the U.S. As discussed in Chapter 4, the consequences of minimum standards are not minimal. Even worse in terms of freedom of education, this rhetoric opens

⁴⁰ The main difference between an open enrolment and voucher system is that funding is allowed to go to schools that don’t abide to the curriculum of the political sphere. Hence, the inclusion of private schools. The way that the funds are directed to the school doesn’t affect this (whether directly to parents or the school). For example, in the case that the political sphere may still hold power to itself to determine when to close or open any school due to their curriculum, whether parents or schools receive directly the funds has no difference. However, such system stops becoming a voucher system and turns into an open enrolment system. These powers can be conferred to the political sphere regardless on how the funds are distributed. The critical point is that students (and parents) can choose outside of the curriculum defined by the political sphere and that they receive an equal amount of funds regardless of their choice.

the education system to the political process that is characteristic of the 20th and 21st century. Hence, for the purpose of this thesis, such systems are regarded as difficult in safeguarding educational freedom and so there is no real difference to an open-enrolment system in terms of the relationship between the social spheres.

The more general conception of the voucher system is one that includes total educational autonomy. On this note, the education system proposed by Christopher Houghton Budd and named *curriculum-neutral capitation* (Houghton Budd 2019) provides a good example. The latter requires that general tax is not used selectively which can only be achieved, as Christopher H. Budd states, “by providing a capitation sum per learner to be paid to whichever school the learner attends” (Houghton Budd 2019:27). The funds that are collected through a general tax are given directly to parents. This system is consistent with freedom of education as it promotes that the student is free to decide outside of the influence of the political sphere. Another system that promotes educational autonomy is Mouringh Boeke proposal (Boeke 1987:46). Mouringh Boeke proposed a system where the role of the political sphere is minimal as to ensure that each student is being properly funded and to *marginally* review the quality of education (due to the constitutional circumstances in the Netherlands) through an independent judge (Boeke 1987:47-48). When a student applies for a school, it is the responsibility of the school to provide sufficient information about the worldview of the school and how it is executed. Therefore, the school has the responsibility to define their own curriculum and to properly inform to prospects students. This voucher proposal is consistent with freedom of education as it provides educational autonomy. Nonetheless, due to the constitutional circumstances, it is difficult to define if freedom of education is completely safeguarded.

Under these distinct proposals of voucher systems, it shows that education systems that promote educational autonomy have had little success in the U.S. and in the Netherlands. Although the Dutch School Struggle led to the incorporation of the right to freedom of education in the Dutch constitutions, educational autonomy was only for a minimum part of the curriculum, mainly in religious teaching.

On the other extreme from open enrolment is the ‘laissez-faire’ system. This is a system where the establishment and funding of the school is done without any government initiative or intervention. In said system, freedom of education is achieved only for a limited section of society that has the disposable income to establish their own schools and to fund them continuously. This system risks that a comparable ‘web’ of accountability, as that created currently by the para-political sphere, would be created as schools search for sources of funding through donations to complement their tuition fees. Moreover, there would be a higher struggle to fund initiatives that go against the perspectives of the owners of capital (which are allowed to freely appropriate freed capital). In a ‘laissez-faire’ system, freedom of education (narrowly understood as only freedom from interference by the state) becomes a smokescreen for unfreedom from the para-political and economic sphere. Moreover, it would lead to high inequalities and thus less adaptability for the children of the poor to truly have an opportunity to develop their positive freedom. A ‘Laissez-faire’ system would surpass the first barrier to freedom of education but not the second. This type of freedom is similar to the “freedom of the market” rather than freedom of education as defined in this thesis.

Lastly, the neo-voucher system is the closest to a ‘laissez-faire’ system with the difference that here the government provide tax-credits when an individual or private organization provides funding to a School Tuition Organization (STO). In a ‘laissez-faire’ system taxation is unrelated to educational matters. Neo-vouchers present the same complications as a

laissez-faire system as the STOs have the discretion over which schools to fund and whom they fund. If such a system is to be broadly supported, the formation of STOs and their relationship with the schools and teachers would be comparable, if not the same, as the current para-political sphere and the cultural sphere. Therefore, even though this system is proposed to obtain freedom of education, it does not support its availability to all, nor does it locate freedom of education in the interaction between the teacher and the student. Nonetheless, the debates around the establishment of neo-voucher systems help to highlight some issues that a voucher system can encounter.

Neo-vouchers were introduced in several states in the U.S.A. When this was done there was a legal battle in the state of Montana (*Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*) where the flow of neo-vouchers was prohibited to religious schools (Kim 2020). The U.S. Supreme Court struck down the system on a 5-4 vote because on the grounds that “‘A State need not subsidize private education,’ Chief Justice John Roberts wrote for the majority. ‘But once [it] decides to do so, it cannot disqualify some private schools solely because they are religious’” (Kim 2020:49). In the dissents of the same case, two justices expressed concerns that opening the “floodgates to the direct state funding of religious schools could lead to the government’s attaching strings to that funding – and to give preferential treatment to some religions over others” (Kim 2020:49); thus, breaking the separation of the state and church as stated in the U.S.A’s First Amendment to their constitution. In this case, there is an advancement for freedom of education in the U.S. as the recognition of *legal equality* between private and public schools seem to be reaching closer as in the Netherlands. Nonetheless the fear that was voiced by the dissent has been also stated in a debate on whether the voucher system would benefit freedom of education. In the debate, the reasoning for this danger was that “once a private school begins accepting vouchers, it is unlikely to go back. Voucher-receiving school will increase wages and debt for expansion and otherwise assume financial obligations that will make opting out very difficult when restrictions are imposed” (Bast, Harmer, and Dewey 1997). A similar notion was exemplified in Figure 5 in Chapter 4 where the political sphere establishes conditions in the presence of financial pressures. When the political sphere has its own educational agenda, or is used by others to impose an agenda, this is always presented as a threat to the cultural sphere. The threat of the political sphere to establish conditions on neo-vouchers is surprising given that by providing tax-credits, the funds that go to schools never pass through the government’s treasury. The latter sparked another debate on whether STOs needed to be accountable to the taxpayers, due to the provision of tax-credits.

In Arizona, through the case of *Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization v. Winn*, it was argued that since the use of STOs provided tax-credits, there was taxpayer standing on how the funds were to be managed. In essence, this means that the STOs need be accountable to taxpayers on how the funds are distributed. In this case, this meant that these funds could not be used for religious private schools (Keller 2011). The debate explored into whether a tax-credit was or was not government money. Ultimately, it was found that taxpayers didn’t have standing on a 5-4 vote (another close vote) in the Arizona supreme court (Keller 2011) and said the neo-voucher system can be said to be safeguarded. However, the core problem for freedom of education is a reason for the lack of ‘standing’ was that the state has no discretion with the source and the use of the funds, only with authorizing the creation of STOs and allowing for the tax-credits (Keller 2011:166). This reduces the potential for freedom of education as it narrows the role of the political sphere, providing large negative freedoms in STOs and not to teachers and students directly. It only achieves freedom of education for a narrow section of the population. As discussed earlier, the consequences of such a system are not desirable. In a way, it is a para-political sphere’s utopia as the economic sphere has total discretion on which STOs to fund and obtain tax-credits in the

process. Such tax-credits would allow corporations to use freed capital more in line with their interests. This type of freedom is close to the “freedom of the market”, as in the laissez-faire system than with freedom of education as defined in this thesis.

The discussions around neo-vouchers and their potential consequences enforce reinforces the arguments not only the constitutional circumstances affect the potential for freedom of education but also the dominant perspective on how accountability should be located in the cultural sphere, regardless of the source of funding. What this boils down to is that there is a general cultural acceptance of the right to education but not to freedom of education or what its implications. This lack of clear cultural understanding of what freedom of education entitles leads to members of society who want freedom for their education to support modes of funding that doesn’t provide it to the whole of society, as in the case of neo-vouchers. Therefore, there needs to be a cultural and political recognition of freedom of education. This means that all taxpayers should understand that accountability of education is a private matter and is done through the private interaction of the students and the teachers under the principles that (a) all students have the right to their desired education and that (b) teachers are never forced to educate against their worldview. There is a necessary role allocated to the political sphere that will be introduced as the issues with the voucher system arises, however, these should not affect these two principles.

Based on my reading of the literature, I propose the following system that might safeguard freedom of education. The system is built up per issue discussed so as to clearly demonstrate the reasoning for every condition. The base is a voucher system that will fund any curriculum that the students (or their parents) desire regardless of whether a national curriculum exist or not. Such a system can be called a *culturally autonomous voucher system*. The emphasis is to provide educational autonomy and the freedom of students to choose the curriculum that they desire the most as the voucher could be used in any of the available curriculums. The first conditions for a culturally autonomous voucher system would be:

1. Freedom of education is a right.
 - a. The political sphere should not be given the responsibility to control the quality of education.
2. Freed capital is collected and distributed via the state or an independent institution.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the method of collection and distribution in the U.S. results in large inequalities of funding. Therefore:

3. The collection of freed capital should be done by the highest level of sovereign political organization.
 - a. The amount provided to each student is to be equal.

These three conditions are not sufficient they still leave the schools open to accountability to the para-political or economic sphere, in a similar way to the neo-voucher system. Moreover, the creation of profit is another method of accountability explicitly addressing the purposes of the economic sphere. Schools should not be held accountable for generating profits for their funders. Hence, concerning the relations between the economic and the cultural sphere:

4. All schools are non-profit.
 - a. If schools are managed through an umbrella organization, said organization is to be a non-profit organization.
 - b. The umbrella organization has no discretion over the curriculum of the schools.

5. All donations by private organizations and individuals are to be collected in a single fund that would complement the funds collected as taxes by the political sphere.
 - a. Schools are prohibited to receive direct donations from individual or organizations.

The fifth condition contrasts with the conclusion of the Arizona supreme court on whether the government has a say on funds that don't pass through the treasury. It is necessary to centralize the collection and distribution of fund for there to be equality in the right to freedom of education. If schools are allowed to have discretion over the source of their funding, this is likely to lead to problems of inequality and its perpetuation (what is called stratification). This assigned role of the political sphere, which does not include, implicitly nor explicitly, that the political sphere should enforce their own quality standards, is necessary to secure the negative freedom of the cultural sphere relative to the economic and the para-political sphere. These five conditions are proposed as the basis for a voucher system that is regulated through the government but does not give the government the right to interfere with the contents of education.

The next section will dive deeper into the merits and demerits of the voucher system. However, it is important to note that many of the voucher systems that have been introduced around the world are based on Friedman's voucher system. The following highlights more issues and necessary conditions that should be included in a culturally autonomous voucher system.

5.3 The voucher system

It is important to note that in this thesis the importance of the voucher system is its link with freedom of education. However, in the literature, the voucher system is often defended because of its supposedly positive effects on the 'achievement' or 'performance' of students. At the same time, it is also criticized because of its negative effects in terms of increasing inequality. This raises the question on how freedom of education and the quality of education are related, and whether freedom of education necessarily leads to higher socio-economic inequality.

One of the core neoliberal assumptions of the introduction of the voucher system was that private schools would be more efficient than public schools (provide higher or the same quality through less expenditure). However, there is no clear advantage between private or public schools in terms of achievement (Bellei 2019). Critically, many of the perceived advantages from private schools arise from institutional advantage that allow them to select their student population on the base of income (by charging tuition or extra fees), ability (previous grades or previous participation in "good" schools), or even disability (Eppele, Romano, and Urquiola 2017; Feigenberg, Yan, and Rivkin 2019; Ravitch 2010; Sanchez 2021; Söderström and Uusitalo 2010; Wong and Rao 2022). This leads to the practice of *cream-skimming* in which schools compete in their potential to control the characteristics of their student population rather than in improving the delivery of the content of education. Cream-skimming thus leads to stratification and to the perpetuation of inequalities. Parents, under stratified conditions, understand that the popularity of the schools is an important factor for future socio-economic outcomes (Cardenas, Fergusson, and Garcia Villegas 2021; Johnsson and Lindgren 2010; MacLeod and Urquiola 2009; Willms, Echols, and Willms 1992). Therefore, the choices of the parents also incentivize stratification creating a reinforcement of the system.

The ability to select students is not what is meant with freedom of education. Moreover, it clearly creates perverse incentives and strategies in the competition between schools. Freedom of education means that every pupil or student can choose their school (rather than the school choosing the pupil). For example, on the basis of religion, a Catholic school has to provide the same opportunity to attend the school to a student who has been raised in any other religion as long as the student understands that they have to participate in the whole of the curriculum as established by the school.

The lack of clear advantage between private and public schools, when cream-skimming is controlled for, is still a good outcome for freedom of education. There is no trade-off between freedom of education and achievement even if achievement is seen as critical. The issue lies in the institutional advantage that schools obtain and clearly goes against the purpose of freedom of education. Therefore, schools should accept all students as long as these students (and their parents) accept the curriculum established by the teachers at the schools. Moreover, this still raises issues to the bias of student population a school may have due to its location (i.e., it can be near a wealthy neighbourhood). Therefore, the voucher should also include money to cover transportation to expand the options of students.

Based on this literature, more items are added to the list from section 2 in this chapter:

6. The student has the right to any education as long as they accept the curriculum followed by the school.
 - a. The voucher may be expanded to cover transportation expenses for students to have a wider range of school options, and for the selection of the schools to not be biased towards the students in their location.

The process of decision-making of parents and students relates to the issue on how quality should be defined and maintained. The definition of the curriculum and how quality is measured in it should be done by teachers. A community may also gather to create their own curriculum and measures of quality, however, it needs to find teachers that align with said curriculum. The teachers are responsible of measuring and ensuring the quality of the school. The second element of quality control is through the decision-making of the parents and the students. Parents and students will need to be clearly informed about the worldview, the curriculum, the pedagogical methods and so on of the school. The more information students have about the school, the better they will be able to judge the quality of the school. The availability of quality information is essential as in its absence, parents will base their decision mainly on infrastructure rather than quality (Willms et al. 1992). The information given by teachers needs to be clear and well-defined as to how different pedagogies and curriculum promote a certain type of learning. Another complication of the choice behaviour of parents is a link between the capacities of parents and their ability to correctly judge the achievement of their children has been found (Blimpo, Evans, and Lahire 2015). Therefore, it may be necessary to support low-income parents for their development of capacities.

Mouringh Boeke (1987: 47-48) proposes that when a student applies to a school, the school has the responsibility of providing complete information to the parents/students. In Boeke's proposals this information would consist of (1) the names of the teachers, (2) school hours and holidays, (3) a budget for the coming year, (4) curriculum and pedagogical principles, (5) the text of the law at hand, and (6) a declaration of the education inspector that this document has been seen by them.

The discussion around quality leads to new conditions related to the quality of education:

7. Teachers have the right to create and choose their own curriculum.
 - a. Teachers or groups of teachers provide a clear definition of their curriculum, their own quality criteria, and how they meet them.

Moreover, to not create disadvantages to the schools due to the presence of low socioeconomic students or those with special needs due to disabilities, the division of the voucher could be changed to provide higher funding to these students. The definition of the differences between vouchers is to be defined through the political sphere, and only on the basis of the conditions of the students. This would modify the condition 3.a:

3. The collection of freed capital should be done by the highest level of sovereign political organization.
 - a. The amount provided to each student is equal except in case of special need conditions of the student. The definition of the differences should be done through a democratic process.

Another type of division that has been argued that is generated by voucher systems is compartmentalization (Laitsch 2016; Merry and Karsten 2011). The latter occurs when people lives are increasingly dominated by a single perspective, and they have less interaction with different perspectives throughout their lives. This has been argued as a consequence of higher freedom of choice based on worldviews in the Netherlands after 1917 (Karsten 1999). However, this finding can be disputed as the diversity of religious worldviews between schools of the same denomination (i.e., Catholic) is broad in the Netherlands compared to the Flemish education system (Franken and Bertram-Troost 2021). If anything, the lack of diversity of religious teaching between the two system is an effect of lower freedom of education as the Flemish government required denominational schools to be recognized by state-recognized religious institutions. Hence, compartmentalization may be illusory if true freedom of education is provided (the school defines the whole of its curriculum). The risk of compartmentalization can also extend from neo-vouchers. Private schools would be incentivized to be recognized by the worldview of the STOs with the highest amount of funds. Moreover, an additional argument against compartmentalization claims it is against social stability and that there is a need for minimum standards due to Milton Friedman's 'neighbourhood effects': Denominational schools have been found to do a better job of nurturing civic virtues than public schools since these schools not only present their worldviews but also discuss how they relate to society (Glenn 2022). Even more, civic education may be more related to the experience of education than its content (Glenn 2022:106). Hence, it is not through minimum standards that civic virtue is to be reached (a part of human flourishing), but by allowing negative freedom in the schools. This adds to the adverse effects of minimum requirements as discussed in Chapter 4. The issue with compartmentalization is covered by the 6th condition as any student is entitled to explore any worldview that they are interested in.

An additional problematic aspect of voucher education systems is the lack of protection of civil rights. In the U.S.A, Fiddiman and Yin (2019) discuss the lack of accountability in private schools concerning the lack of anti-discriminatory protections for students based on race, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. This situation would expand on the freedoms that the schools are not allowed to have as envisioned in the 6th condition. However, the larger issue at hand would be the content of the curriculum if it directly rejects the characteristics of a student concerning these factors. Here so is the clear importance to expand the reach of the student to the highest distance possible so as to find a type of school that could accommodate them. The latter would not be a large problem in an

urban area. Nonetheless, in the case that is demonstrated that is not possible to enter an education that would respect the student's worldview, then there should be the opportunity for (1) opening their own school, (2) attending a public-school with a curriculum broad enough to accommodate most worldviews, or (3) having the resources to be home-schooled. This would add new conditions:

1. Freedom of education is a right.
 - a. The political sphere should not be given the responsibility to control the quality of education.
 - b. The political sphere may propose a broad curriculum to be used in public schools.
 - c. The political sphere should ensure that there are at least two curricular alternatives in every community. This provides the basis to establish public schools even if there is a private school present. Nonetheless, these two schools should receive equal funding.
 - d. The curriculum of the political sphere should be broad enough to ensure no discrimination.
 - e. The teachers at the public school should create their own accountability measures based on the broad curriculum.
 - f. Home-schooling is allowed as a worst-case scenario when no real alternative is present to the parents.
5. All donations by private organizations and individuals are to be collected in a single fund that would complement the fund from the tax-collected by the political sphere.
 - a. Schools are prohibited to receive direct donations from individual or organizations.
 - b. The fund from donations may be used for the initial investment for new schools.

Ultimately, as to include all the principles to safeguard freedom of education from Chapter 4, another important role for the teachers apart from the clear definition of their own curriculum and their internal evaluation methods would be the discretion over the profile and training of the new teacher. It would be possible for a well-established school philosophy would establish not only a curriculum for the education of their students but a curriculum for the education of future teachers. This doesn't exclude the possibility of choosing teacher with different perspectives, however, would provide the philosophy of the school a stronger sense of community that would feel clearly violated if the political sphere would ever intent to establish any accountability or regulation that would de-legitimize their philosophy and their approach to education (as long as it doesn't break the 7th condition). This would add to the set of conditions:

7. Teachers have the right to create and choose their own curriculum.
 - a. Teachers or groups of teachers provide a clear definition of their curriculum, their own quality criteria, and how they meet them.
 - b. The school has complete autonomy on their staff requirements and is allowed to create their own teacher certification curriculum and methods.

5.4 A voucher system to safeguard freedom of education

The resulting revision of the merits and demerits of the voucher system provides at least nine conditions that are needed to provide curricular autonomy to the schools to safeguard freedom of education for the student (parents) and the teachers:

1. Freedom of education is a right.
 - a. The political sphere should not be given the responsibility to control the quality of education.
 - b. The political sphere may propose a broad curriculum to be used in public schools.
 - c. The political sphere should ensure that there are at least two curricular alternatives in every community. This provides the basis to establish public schools even if there is a private school present. Nonetheless, these two schools should receive equal funding.
 - d. The curriculum of the political sphere should be broad enough to ensure no discrimination.
 - e. The teachers at the public school should create their own accountability measures based on the broad curriculum.
 - f. Home-schooling is allowed as a worst-case scenario when no real alternative is present to the parents.
2. Freed capital is collected and distributed via the state or an independent institution.
3. The collection of freed capital should be done by the highest level of sovereign political organization.
 - a. The amount provided to each student is equal except in case of special need conditions of the student. The definition of the differences should be done through a democratic process.
4. All schools are non-profit.
 - a. If schools are managed through an umbrella organization, said organization is to be a non-profit organization.
 - b. The umbrella organization has no discretion over the curriculum of the schools.
5. All donations by private organizations and individuals are to be collected in a single fund that would complement the fund from the tax-collected by the political sphere.
 - a. Schools are prohibited to receive direct donations from individual or organizations.
 - b. The fund from donations may be used for the initial investment for new schools.
6. The student has the right to any education as long as they accept the curriculum followed by the school.
 - a. The voucher may be expanded to cover transportation expenses for students to have a wider range of school options, and for the selection of the schools to not be biased towards the students in their location.
7. Teachers have the right to create and choose their own curriculum.
 - a. Teachers or group of teachers provide a clear definition of their curriculum, their own quality criteria, and how they meet them.
 - b. The school has complete autonomy on their staff requirements and is allowed to create their own teacher certification curriculum and methods.

A voucher system that fulfils these conditions would be expected to support and safeguard freedom of education while diminishing the problems found with it in the literature. The

conditions set forward can be distributed to each social sphere as illustrated in figure 10. With these conditions in each sphere, the ideal relationship from figure 9 in Chapter 4 Section 2 can be achieved.

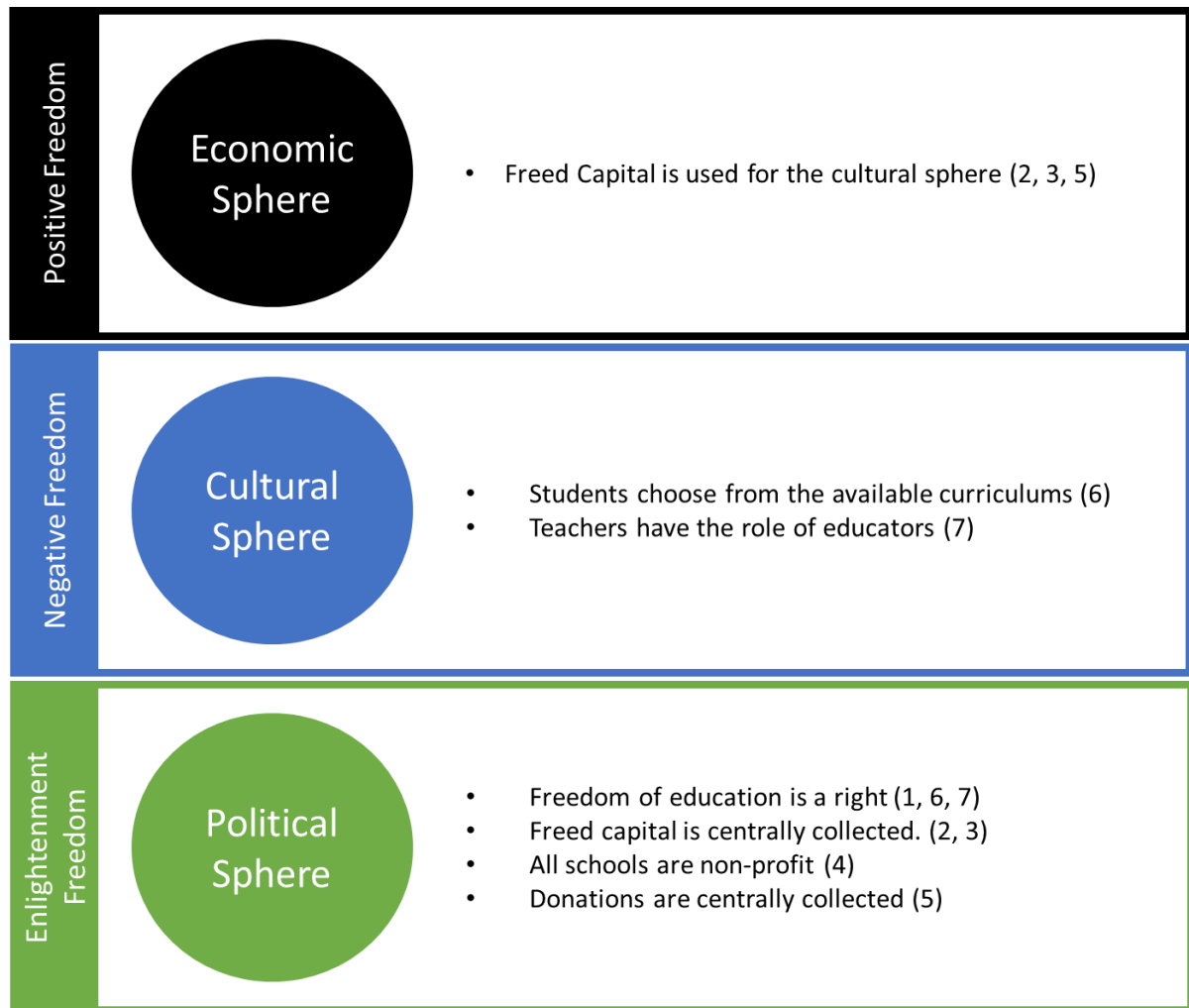


Figure 10. The role of each sphere in the conditions for freedom of education

A large preoccupation when introducing the voucher system seems to be the lack of protection of civil rights. However, it is important to note that a public education system based in a singular curriculum, even if very broad, will always lead to the exclusion of some community. Even if most of the discussions are around religious teachings, as was shown in Chapter 4, different views on how nature relates to humans and the role of science also seem a point of contention especially with indigenous communities (Fortunato 2017). Indeed, the voucher system indeed has been used for segregation in the U.S.A (Fiddiman et al. 2019:5). However, this could be a response to the extensive control from the political sphere. When the only way to obtain freedom of education is through a private school, only the most determined parents will build and promote such schools. Parents that are on the ‘grey zone’ on whether to accept a ‘neutral’ and ‘secular’ education or a ‘radical’ one, may tend to choose more ‘radical’ schools than what they would like since there is no other real middle option (Brighouse 2005). By allowing for more choice, more opportunities are provided for religious teaching to truly serve the development of positive freedom to their children based on their context and not only on creed. There is no need to default to an extreme and schools would interact with other perspectives around the same worldview, thus reducing the potential for ‘radicalization’. It is important to remember that when given options and

flexibility, denominational schools have a large diversity of views on the same religion and have been found to provide greater nurturing of civic virtue (Glenn 2022). In the similar manner, civil rights issues can be properly tackled by providing more options and flexibility. The ideal is to provide more choices of curriculum, not to control the community.

Lastly, another caveat of the neoliberal arguments for the voucher system falls down: the ‘double-taxation’ or double-payment problem (Bast et al. 1997). The latter states that parents that pay private education and pay taxes for public school are indeed being taxed double. The voucher would solve this problem by providing the money back. However, this is a narrow perspective of the role of the political sphere in a system in which freedom of education is a right. The tax that is collected from the individual is not to pay their or their family’s education, it is for everyone to have the right of freedom of education⁴¹. This means that some individuals may need to pay more than they would privately because a rural community (with lower resources) needs more resources to maintain at least two curriculums with a lower student population density than in urban areas.

An added potential and beauty of an education system with the given conditions is not only its support for freedom of education, thus allowing for positive freedom, but the potential conservation of various modes of learning and experiencing life. This conservation would allow societies in times of uncertainty to look back on a larger space of knowledge than only what is popularized by intellectual elites or the evermore influential urban cities. This would provide society with ‘anti-fragility’⁴² to be able to answer unexpected problems such as climate change (Fortunato 2017).

The schools that would be part of such a system could really be called “free schools”. Not because they have great discretion over their own communities, but they have the potential to support the freedom of education of the teacher and the learner.

5.5 Conclusions

The beginning of the chapter recapitulates the necessary information from previous chapters. For freedom of education is essential that the cultural sphere is the sphere of negative freedom. This requires positive freedom in the economic sphere and Enlightenment freedom in the political sphere as to collect the funds from the economic sphere. Afterwards, four proposals for higher freedom are introduced: (1) open enrolment, (2) voucher system, (3) neoliberal voucher system, (4) neo-voucher system, and (5) a ‘laissez-faire’ system. Open enrolment, neo-voucher, and laissez-faire systems are insufficient given the discussions in Chapter 4. The only system that has a promise is the voucher system but with a certain distinction: the political sphere is not allowed to establish minimum standards. With this base, the proposed system will be called a *culturally autonomous voucher system*.

To improve the culturally autonomous voucher system, there is a review of the merits and demerits that have been perceived of the voucher system and a discussion on how these relate to freedom of education. The main problems with the voucher system are the perpetuation of inequality, apparent division of society, and the lack of civil rights security. For the first two issues the problem extends from a misallocation of freedoms in the school community rather

⁴¹ Moreover, the ability to not exit the voucher system would provide another safeguard in case the political sphere intends to establish restriction to the curriculum. Parents that understand the importance to safeguard their curriculum would intent to block the actions of the political sphere.

⁴² An ‘anti-fragile’ system is one that gains form disorder or variance. An example are organic structures, such as the muscles in a human body, that with a certain level of stress signal tend to overcompensate their recovery and, hence, result better prepared for a next stress signal.

than in the teachers and (potential) students. Civil rights issues are the ones with the largest uncertainty. First, the problematic may extend from the absence of freedom of education not higher. Second, it is argued that the method to solve it is to give higher choice and flexibility to establish more diverse curriculums rather than to control the curriculum of the schools. Even if a school is to be founded based on a 'national' curriculum, the teachers need discretion on how to execute it and evaluate it. Throughout the review and discussion, conditions are proposed to solve the perceived problems with the system. The proposed 7 core conditions are argued to be the necessary base for a culturally autonomous voucher system and to diminish apparent potential negative effects of the voucher system.

With this chapter, free time or, as used in this thesis, disposable time come full circle. The word school comes from the Greek word *scholē* which relates to free time for study and practice afforded to people who had no claim to it according to the archaic order prevailing at the time (Masschelein and Maarten 2013). Freed capital as the money-value of disposable time is circled back to the cultural sphere in a way that respects its negative freedom, and this opportunity is given to everyone in society. This gives the potential for schools to be true to their origins: to allow individuals to “leave their known environment, rise above themselves, and renew the world” (Masschelein and Maarten 2013:10) and not a part of a top-down machinery. The renewal of the world in turn has the potential to create more disposable time and then the cycle continues. Schools that are part of said cycle would be truly free schools as they support the freedom of education of society.

6 Thesis Conclusions and Discussions

6.1 Conclusions

The second chapter introduces the capital cycle and disposable time. The creation of intangible capital leads to the creation of physical capital which may result in productivity gains. The result of productivity gains is freed capital which provides for the generalized free development of capacities. The capital cycle is the interaction of the cultural, economic, and political spheres. Intangible capital is developed in the cultural sphere; physical capital and freed capital in the economic sphere; and the re-distribution of freed capital for the generalized free development of capacities is in the political sphere. Nonetheless, why the free development of capacities? The third chapter introduces various philosophers who have stated that humans should look to develop “higher” freedoms rather than only search for the satisfaction of their material needs and wants. These higher freedoms are related to the development of capacities and virtues as embodied in the concept of Aristotle’s Eudaimonia. The development capacities as to obtain virtue by applying practical reason. The development of virtue is connected to the concept of positive freedom. It can be said that as a person obtains virtue, they develop this type of freedom. However, for a person to develop such capacities and virtues needs negative freedom to allow for their development. The development of positive freedom needs the presence of negative freedom for the development of capacities. As a person develops their positive freedom they can relate more responsibly with others as well as expand their possibilities in life through their capacities. This perspective goes against that of Enlightenment freedom, which is born from a different conception of positive freedom, as a ‘form’ of freedom that was supported by Enlightenment thinkers. The latter would perceive the negation of negative freedom to individuals as an advancement to freedom if said individuals developed capacities and virtues according to a worldview that is seen as universal. The presence of Enlightenment freedom diminishes the potential for the positive freedom that relates to human flourishing. This is the core importance of freedom of education. Without negative freedom in education, individuals can’t develop their positive freedom which is seen as essential to leading a truly human life.

In modern society, the presence of Enlightenment freedom is embodied by the political sphere and necessary for the continuance of society. Nonetheless, trouble occurs when the political sphere uses its power to negate the negative freedom in the cultural sphere in a way that limits the potential for the development of capacities. Even more, the political sphere may be influenced by the economic sphere to continuously negate the negative freedom of the cultural sphere for economic values. This leads to a ‘misallocation’ of freedoms. The ideal allocation of freedoms in each sphere is one where the cultural sphere is the sphere of negative freedom, the political sphere is the sphere of Enlightenment freedom, and the economic sphere is the sphere of positive freedom. Positive freedom in the economic sphere means that it would willingly and responsibly provide the produced freed capital for it to be re-distributed to the cultural sphere.

What has been the allocation of freedoms in society? The fourth chapter presents the cases of large educational reforms in the U.S. and the Netherlands from the late 18th century until the 21st century. The late 18th century saw the rise of government-controlled education. The inspiration for the establishment of government-controlled education was Enlightenment ideals for the purpose of creating commonality and stability in society. There is a clear misallocation of freedoms as the cultural sphere is assigned the purpose of maintaining a

singular vision of society. Throughout the 19th century, in the Netherlands occurred a series of events known as the Dutch School Struggle. This was a long series of events that culminated in the recognition in the legal equality of private and public schools. Therefore, these two types of schools were to be funded equally. In the same period in the U.S, it led to the establishment of the common school system which meant the continuous exclusion of funding to worldviews that the political sphere didn't support. The second period (mid-20th until early 21st century) presents the rise of what is known as neoliberal reforms. In this period the role of the political sphere became heavily influenced by the economic sphere, through local and global para-political spheres⁴³, to shape the cultural sphere for the creation of economic values. The rhetoric of said reforms uses a form of autonomy that is not related to the actual autonomy needed for freedom of education nor to allow the development of positive freedom. Moreover, the instruments of the political sphere changed to continue their role of controlling education by establishing minimum quality standards and thus providing an illusion of autonomy for schools. This period demonstrates that the Dutch School Struggle was not entirely successful and only secured negative freedom for a small aspect of the curriculum. From these two periods of reform it is found that there are two core barriers to freedom of education: (a) the (constitutional) circumstances that entrust the task to control the quality of education to the state (the political sphere as the educator of society), and the related attachment of external conditions ('accountability') to the funding of schools; and (b) the influence exerted on the education from the economic sphere (corporations) and the para-political sphere (e.g., philanthropic foundations, a section of the cultural sphere funded by the rich parties in the economic sphere).

The fifth chapter aims to discuss what education system could safeguard freedom of education inspired by the available literature. There have been five different systems proposed for freedom of education: (1) open enrolment, (2) voucher system, (3) Neoliberal voucher system, (4) Neo-voucher system, and (5) 'laissez-faire' system. The ideal is to propose a system that provides total educational autonomy to the teachers in their schools and students to participate in any curriculum they see fit and be funded. The proposed system is termed the *culturally autonomous voucher system* and contrasts with the neoliberal voucher system. Even further, the neoliberal version does not present a distinction with an open enrolment system since educational autonomy is diminished in both systems. The culturally autonomous voucher system aims to locate freedom of education in the correct place: in the interaction between the students and teachers. After a literature review of the discussions and potential issues with the neoliberal voucher systems (To the knowledge of the author, a system with full educational autonomy⁴⁴ has not been implemented), seven conditions are proposed to safeguard freedom of education while avoiding social problems that could arise from the voucher system. Critically, such a system moves the role of the educator from the political sphere and returns it to the teachers and their interactions with parents and students (in the cultural sphere). A culturally autonomous voucher system is the answer to the main research question: *How can society safeguard the use of disposable time for the free development of capacities of individuals?*

6.2 Limitations & Suggestions for Further Research

The limitations and suggestions are discussed jointly on a per chapter basis.

⁴³ For example, philanthropic foundations, a section of the cultural sphere funded by the rich parties in the economic sphere.

⁴⁴ The Netherlands is often regarded as one of the school systems with the most freedom. However, under this thesis, the Netherlands fall into an open enrolment system which is not sufficient for real freedom of education.

The second chapter focuses on the capital cycle and the interaction of the social spheres. The capital cycle is limited to the economic process that led to the creation of freed capital and the funding of intangible capital. This leaves the framework open to other relevant questions such as how the development of physical capital would be funded (as intangible capital doesn't automatically embody in physical capital). This question would potentially introduce other types of capital such as financial capital (capital that is used for investing in the economic sphere), and the role of the financial system. Moreover, with the addition of financial capital, it could be studied what is the relationship between the financial system and the development of intangible capital (i.e., how is the development of intangible capital if it were to be funded through financial capital and not freed capital), and how would this relate to freedom of education. Furthermore, the question of economic rents could potentially be discussed in the framework of the capital cycle. The expansion of the capital cycle as to include other economic phenomena (rents and financial capital) would provide a framework that would allow to clearly distinguish the role of different economic actors and their interactions with society. Ultimately, the capital cycle is supported through Marx' *Fragment on Machines*. It would be possible to use another economic perspective and how it compares to the capital cycle.

The third chapter discusses the relationship of freedom related to human flourishing. This discussion can be deepened to include a larger discussion on freedom and its division as negative and positive freedom. This would explore other classification of freedoms and how they would be positioned in the social spheres. This new classification can be related to freedom of education and potentially new positions of freedoms may be found. Lastly, freedom could also be studied in base of other philosophical ideals or religions to understand other ways that freedom of education may be framed, or even if freedom of education is compatible or desirable to these worldviews.

The fourth chapter can be expanded by either introducing more countries, more educational reform periods, or to deepen the study in a single reform period. On the latter, a deeper investigation of neoliberal reforms may lead to a better understanding of the modern circumstance and barriers to freedom of education. Moreover, the focus of the chapter was mainly on the series of events that resulted in changes in education and the struggle surrounding them. Cases of failed intents of educational reform may be included to better understand the social conditions that may stop these reforms and use them to safeguard freedom of education. Finally, the role of educational technologies and its direct impact on freedom of education can be discussed and researched further as in the thesis it is marginal and may have a higher role in neoliberal reforms in education.

Ultimately, the fifth chapter provides 7 conditions which all can be studied which are defined from a broad study of the voucher system. Each of these conditions open the possibility to be research further and to be more specific on how each of them would work in reality. The first condition ("Freedom of education is a right") can be studied further as to clearly define what changes in the constitution or law would be needed to properly define the role of the political sphere. The same applies for the second, third, and fifth condition concerning the collection of freed capital, and donations. Moreover, it is possible to be more specific what kinds of institutions are needed to properly collect and distribute freed capital, and what would be the optimal involvement of the political sphere in this process concerning freedom of education. The sixth condition (The student has the right to any education as long as they accept the curriculum of the school) needs to be studied deeper as to properly define the relationship between student admission in schools in a way that safeguards freedom of education without creating the risk of cream-skimming. Lastly, the seventh condition (Teachers or groups of

teachers provide a clear definition of their curriculum, their own quality criteria, and how they meet them) can be explored further on what are the best ways to present the information of the available curriculums to the parents and students. As how it was broadly discussed in Chapter 5, how this information is presented has an effect on the decision-making of the parents and students.

6.3 Relevance to Management of Technology

The term capital is used frequently in the MSc. Management of Technology and whenever finance, economics, or technology is discussed. For such an important word, capital is rarely considered deeply. It is used flexibly to mean a lot of things or to create factors in our studies. To understand capital better is to understand better how our society functions and what it prioritizes. As argued in the thesis, technology is an expression of capital. Capital is seen a concept that changes in the economic process in both its quality and role. This thesis aims to use this broader conception of capital and provide an example on how it can change our perspective of the role of the economy. Moreover, since the purpose of capital is socially defined and could be channelled for the flourishing of human beings. In our current society, technological firms have large discretion on how capital relates to society and its aims. Therefore, to understand the broader role of capital in society would provide a better understanding of what potential roles managers of technological firms can have in respect to society and how they relate to it.

6.4 Academic relevance

The main academic relevance of the thesis is the connection of three fields of academic knowledge: economics, philosophy, and educational reform. At the core, the thesis dwells on how different parts of human life (cultural, economic, and political) can be connected to lead to their human flourishing, and this can be done better when multiple fields of knowledge are connected. The connection between these fields of knowledge is through the concept of capital, especially intangible capital when it is expanded from its neoclassical definition. In the field of economics, the thesis moves away from the orthodoxy of neoclassical economics to provide a better and complete reasoning on why freedom of education is needed. The latter is only possible when the philosophy underpinning neoclassical economics (Utilitarianism) is contrasted with other philosophies such as Aristotle's *Eudaimonia*. In the space of educational reform, it provides a deeper understanding of the (absent) relationship between the neoliberal voucher system (as the most promoted education system in the 21st century) and freedom of education.

6.5 Societal relevance

The ideal impact that this thesis can have would be to expand and correctly situate the role of the government and the “market” in education. Even more, based on the philosophical basis in the thesis, individuals could potentially understand that the value of the economy is because it can provide more disposable time to explore life, rather than the value of life is to be fully productive for the economy. Even to the extent that even our natural environment becomes endangered. If individuals in a society are able to correctly position the role of the economic and the political in their human development, then they can create a society that has the opportunity for human flourishing.

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Tables

Table 1. The definitions of capital

Type of Capital	Sub-types	Definition or reference to	Reference
Capital (Dictionary)	as Money	money and possessions, especially a large amount of money used for producing more wealth or for starting a business	(Cambridge Dictionary 2021)
	in "Business English", Finance & Economics	money that is used for investment or for starting a business.	(Cambridge Dictionary 2021)
	in "Business English", Accounting & Economics	the total amount of money and property that an individual or company owns.	(Cambridge Dictionary 2021)
	in "Business English", Finance & Economics	money that is lent or borrowed and will have to be paid back	(Cambridge Dictionary 2021)
	in "Business English", Economics & Politics	people who own the businesses, land, industries, and other forms of wealth in society, considered as a group	(Cambridge Dictionary 2021)
Capital (Classical Economics - Ricardo, Marx)		as a Social Class	(Lewin 2005)
Capital (Classical Economics - Ricardo)		a set of items that are commensurable, aggregate, and can earn a rate of return.	(Lewin 2005)
Capital (Classical Economics - Adam Smith)		A part of a person's stock of commodities which is expected to yield an income.	(Hennings 1987)

Capital (Marx)		It is the accumulation of money due to the circulation of commodities. Money is only capital when used to buy something to sell it again. Capital only exists within the process of buying and selling.	(Marxist Internet Archive n.d.)
	Circulating Capital	The material and the product of labour. It takes different forms, which points of departure is money. Then it can transform into the production (realization) process [intermediary steps of the process], product, [and] retransformation into money and surplus capital.	(Marx [1857] 1973)
	Fixed Capital	The means of labour. Objectified knowledge in machinery used in production.	(Marx [1857] 1973)
	Constant Capital	The value [exchange value] of goods and materials required to produce a commodity.	(Marxist Internet Archive n.d.)
	Variable Capital	The wages paid to produce commodity. Variable capital is the only capital that adds value.	(Marxist Internet Archive n.d.)
Capital (Austrian Economics) [1]		Capital as durable heterogeneous productive equipment whose productivity is intrinsically link to its structure (in the production process) and obtain their value through the market prices of the commodities (goods and services) it contributes	(Baetjer and Lewin 2007)
Capital (Austrian Economics) [2]		is a subjective and conceptual tool used for the accounting of business value. Capital is the result of capitalizing the revenue stream, the value added, from successful consumption.	(Lewin and Cachanosky 2019)
Capital (Neoclassical)		A stock (of wealth or property, or the value of either) existing at an instant of time	(Fisher 1904)
Intangible Capital		An asset without physical substance that is excludable (i.e., it becomes property) and has financial expectations of returns.	(Corrado et al. 2017, 2005)
	Market	Software; databases; R&D; Entertainment & artistic originals; design; mineral exploration; brands; organizational capital; managerial capital; purchased organizational services; firm-specific human capital (employer-provided training)	(Corrado et al. 2017)

	Non-Market (by SPINTAN)	Public administration and defence; scientific research and development; compulsory social security; education; human health and social work activities; arts, entertainment, and recreation.	(Corrado et al. 2017)
	Organizational Capital	The accumulated knowledge that is built up in firms through investment in organising and changing the production process.	(Corrado et al. 2017)
Human Capital (2)		(In relation to physical capital) Any physical capital must combine with human capital before it can create value.	(Baetjer and Lewin 2007)
Intellectual Capital			
	Human Capital (3)	Employees' knowledge, skill, capability, and attitude in relation to fostering performances which customers are willing to pay for and the company's profit comes from.	(Chen and Zhu 2004)
	Structural Capital	The mechanisms and structure of an enterprise that can help support employees in their quest for optimum intellectual performance, and the overall business performance can thereupon be achieved.	(Chen and Zhu 2004)
	Innovation Capital	A part of structural capital, it is the conjoint effect of human capital and structure capital. It can be made only with the combination of excellent employee, reasonable regulations, culture, and technique.	(Chen and Zhu 2004)
	Customer Capital (Market Capital)	Acts as a bridge and a catalyst on the operation of Intellectual Capital, is the main requirement and determinant in converting Intellectual Capital into market value and thereupon organization business performance.	(Chen and Zhu 2004)
Career Capital		Accumulated competences that the unit obtains during education, job, life experience, social and cultural experience.	(BARWIŃSKA-MAŁAJOWICZ and TĘCZA 2019) (1)
	Educational capital	Difference between the resources of initial knowledge and the knowledge obtained after finishing the studies by the graduate.	(Dworak 2012) cited in (1)
	Professional experience capital	The difference between the received human capital and the sum of the cost of living and received education.	(Mieczysław 2002) cited in (1)
	Language capital	The ability of a graduate to use a foreign language.	(Bańka [2006] 2016) cited in (1)
	Entrepreneurship capital	Manifest itself in proactive behaviour that creates and change the reality	(BARWIŃSKA-MAŁAJOWICZ and TĘCZA 2019)

Human Capital (1)		Refers mainly to the skills, training, and work experience of entrepreneurs.	(Elam 2008)
Cultural Capital		Long-lasting personal dispositions of the mind and body (embodied form), cultural goods (objectified form), and educational qualifications (institutionalised form)	(Bourdieu 1986)
	Academic Capital	Arises when there is a strong relationship between qualification, rank, and remuneration.	(Bourdieu 1986)
Social Capital		The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition - or in other words, to membership in a group - which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital	(Bourdieu 1986)
	Social Media Capital	is reflected on the size of an organization's social media network, its degree of influence over that network, and the extent to which its publics are engaged in that network. Also, social capital created through social media.	(Saxton and Guo 2014)