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# HENRI WALLON

(1879-1962)

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In the history of ideas in this century, Henri Wallon is remembered much more as a psychologist than as an educator. And yet his name, in association with that of the illustrious physicist Paul Langevin, is today to be found inscribed on the façade of numerous schools in France. Together with Langevin, he was the originator of a project to reform French education that, though never put into practice, remains the most comprehensive and original scheme of the century. Widely known in France and in some other countries, this project had a direct or indirect influence on many other projects and inspired a number of partial reforms.

In this study we shall try to follow the intellectual journey of a scholar whose life's work was devoted to the study of children, the conditions in which they develop, the way they behave and their evolution.

## Landmarks of a career

Born in Paris in 1879 into an upper middle-class family from the north of France, Henri Wallon was brought up with his six brothers and sisters 'in a republican and democratic atmosphere'. Admitted to the Ecole normale supérieure in 1899, he obtained his *agrégation* in philosophy in 1902: his future seemed to lie in teaching. After a year teaching at the *lycée* of Bar-le-Duc, however, he decided to embark on the study of medicine before eventually turning, like his older contemporary, Georges Dumas, to psychology. But it was psychiatry, more particularly child psychiatry, that absorbed him for many years in various hospitals where he showed particular interest in the motor and mental anomalies of children, concerning which he recorded numerous observations between 1908 and 1914.

After mobilization as a doctor during the First World War, he returned to civilian life to find that his observations now seemed completely out of date to him. He therefore rewrote his doctoral thesis on 'stages and disturbances in the motor and mental development of the child', which he upheld in 1925 and subsequently published under the title *L'enfant turbulent* [The Troublesome Child]. From as early as 1919, his strong interest in child psychology—rather exceptional for the time—led to him being asked to give a series of lectures at the Sorbonne on the subject. Despite the prestige attached to these teaching duties, he was not entirely satisfied. Thus he gave medical and psychological consultations in a dispensary in a working-class district of Paris and, in 1922, in a school at Boulogne-Billancourt in the Paris suburbs, set up a small laboratory for the purposes of both teaching and research with the assistance of a few primary teachers. There he took in degree students and future inspectors of education and embarked on research into the psychological development of children by means of interviews and surveys on their adaptation to school and social life, using some of the first tests known. At the same time, he collaborated closely with the Deaf and Dumb Institute, then located at Asnières, not far from Paris.

From 1925, when he was appointed Director of the first Child Psychobiology Laboratory at the *École pratique des hautes études* in Paris, Wallon continued his twin activities of research and teaching. But in his research, he was always mindful of its practical and sometimes immediate applications in the education of children. This was so in particular for his studies in psychomotricity, the mechanisms of memory or moral judgement. In addition to his laboratory work, he soon started giving consultations for ‘pupils subject to intellectual or behavioral disorders’ and founded a Vocational Guidance Center (one of the earliest known) for schoolchildren in the working-class suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt. This vocational guidance service marked a new concern on the part of Wallon just after the creation, on the initiative of his friends Henri Piéron, Professor at the Collège de France, Julien Fontegne and Henri Laugier, employment specialists, of an *Institut national d’orientation professionnelle* (National Institute of Vocational Guidance) for the training of guidance counselors.

From that time onwards, Henri Wallon’s work was constantly to reflect, in many different forms, both his sustained interest in the psycho-biological development of children and his concern that his research should be of practical use for their education. He established contacts with the various New Education movements that were developing in France on the models of those spearheaded by Maria Montessori in Italy, Ovid Decroly and his *École de l’Érmitage* in Belgium and Édouard Claparède and Pierre Bovet in Switzerland. He also maintained relations outside France with other persons who were, like him, responsible for medical training, but this did not stop him from being firmly entrenched in the educational environment of his country and, for example, giving strong support to Célestin Freinet and his school printing schemes.

Once again attracted by anything that he thought might broaden the field of psychology and its applications, he played an active part in working out the skills and interests to which such guidance should actually be keyed. While continuing with his teaching in this new institute, he decided to test the child observation and examination methods in his own laboratory. But this activity, which brought him into daily contact with schoolchildren, was not enough to satisfy him. He wanted to broaden the scope of the teaching program organized for his students and requested that a chair be established at the Collège de France devoted—rather surprisingly for an institution in which Ribot and later Janet had taught scientific psychology—to ‘the psychology and education of children.’ Thanks to the particularly keen support of Henri Piéron, the highly reputed Professor of the Physiology of Sensations, the proposed theme was accepted and, apart from a four-year interruption when it was suspended by the Vichy Government during the Occupation (1941-44), the course was studied at the Collège de France from 1937 to 1949.

In his inaugural lecture Wallon showed that ‘the relations between psychology and education are not the relations between a normative science and an applied science or art. Psychology is still sufficiently close to its roots for us to be able to see how much in its beginnings a science is bound up with practical problems.’<sup>2</sup> All the stages and all the forms of a child’s development must be studied since an understanding of children ‘requires the collaboration of all those who in one way or another are in contact with them’.<sup>3</sup> Hence the need to define the conditions and rules of observation: ‘Observation enables us to formulate the problems, but it is the problems as formulated that make observation possible.’<sup>4</sup> In this lecture, Wallon went on to analyze in meticulous detail the method of tests and its limitations, the pros and cons of isolated laboratory work and above all, once again, the need to take account of all the reactions of children to their environment.

The text of this inaugural lecture laid down the broad lines of an approach to teaching that would find expression a few years later in three major works: *L’évolution psychologique de l’enfant* [The Psychological Evolution of the Child] (1941), *De l’acte à la pensée* [From Action to Thought] (1942) and *Les origines de la pensée chez l’enfant* [The Origin of Thought among Children] (1945).

## The Langevin-Wallon project for educational reform

In 1936, just when the Popular Front came to power, Wallon agreed to co-operate with the Minister Jean Zay, the Inspector Gustave Monod, and Professors Roger Gall and Alfred Weiler in setting up 'new classes' for the first year of secondary education. For the first time, activity methods and continuous observation of pupils would be practiced. These classes were largely inspired by the work of Decroly and others. The Second World War put a stop to these initiatives and to the development of a number of experimental secondary schools; it was not until 1945 that some of these experiments were resumed, on a smaller scale and with limited resources.

In 1946, the 'Project for Educational Reform' drafted by Paul Langevin and Henri Wallon in the name of a 'Ministerial Committee', whose twenty-three members were drawn from the different levels of French education and whose vice-chairman was Henri Piéron, was tabled at the National Assembly.

The parliamentarians to whom it was addressed never discussed it. Over a period of nearly fifty years, however, a great many of the proposals it contains and the improvements it suggests have been adopted in France and sometimes even in other countries, without explicit reference being made to the project itself. It should also be borne in mind that most of the members of this committee had begun their work in 1942, during the Occupation, as members of the Resistance. The 1946 'project' therefore represented the culmination of a long process of consultation and reflection on the shape to be taken by the reform of French education.

In the introduction, the authors state that 'the complete rebuilding of our education system is founded on a small number of principles that will be given practical expression in all the measures envisaged for both the immediate and more distant future.'<sup>5</sup> Further on, they specify that

the reform of our education must be the embodiment in our institutions of the right of young people to full personal development [...] It must serve to proclaim and protect the right of all children and all adolescents to education. This education will be based on knowledge of the psychology of young people and on the objective study of each individual.<sup>6</sup>

To enable young people to enjoy this right to education, a limit needs to be placed on the size of classes, which must in no circumstances exceed twenty-five students. Even more important, 'educational guidance, followed later by vocational guidance, should result in each worker, each citizen, being put in the job most fitted to his capabilities and productive potential.'<sup>7</sup> For this purpose it is essential that general education and specialization be linked together throughout an individual's school career. For 'general culture represents what brings together and unites people, while occupations all too often represent what separates them.'<sup>8</sup> Thus 'the school, whether located in a huge conurbation or the tiniest of hamlets, must always be a center for the dissemination of culture'.<sup>9</sup>

These principles having been laid down, it remains necessary to determine the structure and organization of education at its various levels, according to the various stages to which children should be assigned by age.

The nursery school would be designed for children aged between three and seven. And if the age of admission to nursery school were raised, in line with the committee's wishes, from two to three years 'it would be essential for the proper intellectual development of children that the day-care centers in which many of them spend their days be provided with kindergarten teachers.'<sup>10</sup>

Nursery school would be followed by the first level of education, compulsory from the age of seven to eighteen years and divided into three stages. In the first stage, from seven to eleven years, 'all children receive the same education (for both psychological and educational reasons) but the teaching methods will be geared to the varying abilities of the children.'<sup>11</sup> Hence the urgent need to establish classes for children with mental, moral or physical handicaps. The second stage, from

eleven to fifteen years of age, is seen as a period of first options, with a core curriculum ‘for all children whatever their specialization,’<sup>12</sup> and special courses including ‘a choice of activities to test the children’s aptitudes and abilities.’<sup>13</sup> Since some abilities do not become apparent until the age of about thirteen or fourteen, the basic options for this age group would be taught by specialist teachers using activity methods; it should always be possible to switch from one option to another, with extra tutoring being provided to ease the transition. Lastly, ‘as rural children should be able to benefit from the Reform in the same way as all other children’, it would be necessary to increase the number of secondary schools provided for them.<sup>14</sup>

A third and final stage for students aged 15 to 18 years was to be called the ‘determining stage’. After a selection test, these adolescents would be steered towards ‘practical courses’ (for those who ‘display more manual than intellectual skills’),<sup>15</sup> to occupational courses (for ‘children likely to fill middle-level production posts and who appear better fitted for practical action than for theoretical studies’).<sup>16</sup> The children could also be steered to theoretical courses—courses for those with recognized theoretical skills, who would be channeled towards the baccalaureate.

Higher education would include a first level of ‘pre-university instruction’ aimed at ‘providing students with the general and technical preparation they need in order to study profitably the problems that arise in the sciences or arts.’<sup>17</sup> In higher education itself, ‘theoretical and technical courses would be grouped together in the universities’ and ‘universities grouped together on a regional basis’. Lastly, care would be taken to preserve ‘the three functions of higher education’, which were defined as ‘career-oriented education, given in the universities and then supplemented in technical institutes,’<sup>18</sup> ‘research work in which future researchers could pursue their training in special centers and university institutes providing the necessary environment for their scientific education, thanks to collaboration between teachers and researchers’<sup>19</sup> and ‘cultural education’, which would not consist in ‘popularization’ and would not ‘address the occupational concerns of universities.’<sup>20</sup>

Such a diversity of courses and such scope for different ways of acceding to culture require that special importance be attached to ‘teacher training’, which constituted the third facet of this project. Teacher training was considered to include compulsory education up to the age of eighteen, thus implying a distinction between core subject teachers and special subject teachers. The two pre-university years would take place in teacher-training colleges in which a distinction should be made between ‘future primary teachers interested mainly in the children themselves and their psychology and in pedagogical problems and those whose aptitudes mark them out more for literary and scientific studies.’<sup>21</sup>

The *écoles normales supérieures* (ENS) were ‘institutions of high culture’ for graduate students wishing to prepare the *agrégation*. They would differ from one another, according to their objectives and mode of recruitment, as being for advanced literary or scientific studies, teacher training, technical education and physical education. In each case, the duration of studies would depend on the special field. Lastly, at the level of higher education, the recruitment of teachers for the humanities, science, medicine and law would be organized in very different ways depending on the discipline. Special programmes would be provided for the training of schoolteachers in order to give them ‘experience of industry, agriculture, business and administration, that is, experience of professional life in all its forms and at all levels.’<sup>22</sup>

## Educational psychology

Part IV of the project deals with ‘supervision and in-service training’. This supervision should be ‘pedagogical in regard to teachers and psychological in regard to students’. Despite its brevity—it occupies only two pages—this section probably contains the most innovative features of the project.

Far from being confined to the function of judging teachers, inspectors are expected to become ‘the regular advisers of their charges. They must be able to pass on to them an awareness of the progress that can be achieved through teaching and they must be capable of showing them how to put it into practice.’<sup>23</sup> In certain cases specialized inspectors would be needed to avoid, for example, ‘the heresy of treating the education of sub-normal children and the education given in nursery schools alike by giving them the same inspectors.’<sup>24</sup>

In these pages the tone becomes more vehement as we touch upon what, in the eyes of its authors, constitutes the very core, the real boldness, of this reform. They argue that educational supervision must go hand in hand with the ‘psychological supervision’ of pupils. This supervision, entrusted to a specialist in psychological methods, would help to determine the future course to be followed by learners. This was a ‘major innovation’: it would be essential to provide, as had been done by education reformers in some other countries, for the establishment of a body of educational psychologists with adequate educational qualifications, such as a university degree and, if possible, a certain amount of teaching experience. In addition they should have followed theoretical and practical courses in psychology leading to a diploma awarded by a university and recognized by the State. ‘Their status and the rules governing their promotion should take account of their qualifications in both psychology and pedagogy.’<sup>25</sup>

If educational psychology—introduced into several schools in 1946 and even into a small number of *lycées* for a short period—is still contested today despite the efforts of its originators and those who practice it, this is because considerable ambiguity is still associated with the function of school psychologist. As we have seen, Wallon had from the beginning wanted them to be teachers trained in pedagogical skills and to have undertaken specialized studies in child psychology. School psychologists were not to be confused with educational counselors, to whom they might be of assistance but did not replace; nor were they to be confused with remedial language or psychomotor instructors or with psychotherapists.

On all these points and to guard against any ambiguity, Wallon and those in charge of the training of school psychologists in university institutes at Paris, Grenoble, Caen and Aix were always very firm.

On several occasions Wallon again turned his thoughts to the role and functions of school psychologists at a time when a number of them had already taken up their duties. In an issue of the journal *Enfance*, he wrote that ‘the school psychologist must come to the rescue of the child’ and that ‘the school psychologists must help children to discover themselves’.<sup>26</sup> And ‘instead of being concerned with selection, the school psychologist should aim at the fullest possible development of each individual’s educational and cultural potential’.<sup>27</sup>

More than thirty years after Wallon’s death, French school psychologists remain uneasy about their working conditions and about the future of their profession. Perhaps their work does not always match its beginnings, but it is now more clearly understood thanks to research and theses of a high caliber. A good many of the studies carried out on the children of migrant workers since 1966, for example, originated in the problems faced by school psychologists.

The final chapters of the draft reform are devoted to ‘curricula, timetables, methods and the measurement of success’ (Chapter V), including in particular the organization of remedial, further training and adaptation classes. It is worth noting the emphasis laid on moral and civic education (Chapter VI), and on training for citizenship and on social education (Chapter VII). Social education was a new and original topic that deserves to be looked at, for it denotes ‘not only education for all, but the possibility for all, after the end of their schooling and throughout their lives, to continue developing their intellectual, aesthetic, professional, civic and moral culture.’<sup>28</sup>

It should be stressed that this broad and generous design for a truly democratic school was never carried into effect, but it has been the implicit or explicit source of many innovations in French education since 1946. Even today, the new perspective it offers on educational and cultural opportunity is, whether recognized or not, the starting-point for any attempt to revitalize education.

## Henri Wallon and psychoanalysis

At the present time, when many school psychologists recommend psychotherapy for children who worry parents or teachers, Wallon's view of psychoanalysis and, in particular, of Freud's explanation of the psychic development of children may well give us food for thought.

Wallon has often been regarded as a dogged opponent of psychoanalysis and yet attentive readers of his work have shown that this was not the case and have identified far more points of agreement than of disagreement between Wallon and Freud. As early as 1920, Wallon was carefully reading Freud, who at the time was practically unknown in France and not yet translated. In an article that was subsequently incorporated in a treatise on psychology, Wallon referred to the founder of psychoanalysis at length.<sup>29</sup> In this article he presents and analyses the Freudian conception of hysteria, but at the same time expresses his reservations: 'In psychology, the account given by the subject is often the sole means of information. All the more reason then to question its reliability.'<sup>30</sup>

Some fifteen years later he asked two young psychoanalysts to draft two chapters of Volume 8 of the *Encyclopédie française* devoted to 'Mental life.'<sup>31</sup> He asked Daniel Lagache, then a senior lecturer at the University of Strasbourg, to write articles on 'the pathological method', 'cortical deficiencies', 'male sexuality' and 'sexuality and psychopathy'; and he asked Jacques Lacan, former senior registrar at the Faculty of Medicine of Paris, to write on 'concrete complex factors of family psychology' and 'family complexes in pathology'.

He justified these choices—surprising for the time—during a radio interview:

In entrusting certain chapters to authors whom I knew to have Freudian leanings, I was only recognizing the importance of the Freudian movement in psychology. It gave fresh momentum to whole areas of research, in particular those relating to the life of the emotions. I don't think there are any psychologists nowadays who can avoid using concepts created by Freud. No doubt the significance of a number of these concepts has changed somewhat, even among staunch Freudians. But it is not by digging in one's heels that one arrives at the truth.<sup>32</sup>

Wallon had some harsher things to say about the thinking of Freud in the important preface he wrote for Hesnard's book on *L'Univers morbide de la faute* [The Unhealthy World of Error]. He welcomed the author's transcription 'of Freudian entities and myths' in practical, objective and rational terms, but immediately added that 'the great danger of psychoanalytical ideas [...] lies in the fact that they merge the individual and society together instead of linking them to each other, that they seek in the individual a root-and-branch explanation of society.'<sup>33</sup>

## The journal 'Enfance'

In late 1947 when Wallon, approaching the age of retirement, was going to have to give up his teaching post at the Collège de France, he agreed to found a French journal devoted to child psychology. The first issue of *Enfance* was published in January 1948. Up to the time of his death, he contributed eleven articles and ten prefaces to this fortnightly journal, widely distributed in more than sixty countries.

In the very first issue, Wallon set out the goals of the journal. 'To our way of thinking, psychology, pedagogy, neuropsychiatry and sociology together form a whole in which each part is essential to the others'.<sup>34</sup> The journal would therefore address these different subjects 'with constant reference to education'.<sup>35</sup> With an almost premonitory sense, he wrote:

In many countries, events in recent years have sapped the organic and moral foundations of young people's lives, through malnutrition, the break-up of the family, insecurity and a wide array of temptations. The damage is largely to the psyche and may suitably be dealt with in our journal.<sup>36</sup>

For almost fifteen years, *Enfance* was the first to publish the work produced by Wallon's team. We find him here on familiar ground: 'Object Classification in Children';<sup>37</sup> 'Children's Reproduction of Short-time Spans',<sup>38</sup> and 'The Representation of Weight in the Child's Mind.'<sup>39</sup> We also find the same strict standards with regard to experimentation, the same precise approach to data analysis and the same concern to set out findings faithfully and clearly. He also wrote in a more personal capacity on 'psychological tests and mental clinics'<sup>40</sup> and on 'pre-categorical thinking in children,'<sup>41</sup> thereby pursuing in his journal a good number of the concerns that he had addressed in his teaching.

But it is perhaps his 'prefaces', 'preambles' or 'forewords' in 'special issues' of the journal that most accurately reflect the broad range of his concerns and his unflagging interest in all areas of children's activity. The variety of the themes covered in these issues is particularly revealing. Some relate to the school environment with, for example, issues devoted to 'educational psychology', others to 'learning to read', and others to 'the first year of secondary education'. On each theme, first-hand knowledge was gathered and practices were compared, enabling Wallon in each case to reach the conclusion that pedagogy and child psychology were not able to be meshed together.

The journal devoted a good deal of space to describing and analyzing what we now call children's leisure-time cultural activities. For example, 'Children's Drawings' (1950), 'Children's Newspapers' (1953), 'Children's Books' (1956) and 'Film Clubs for the Young' (1957) had issues devoted to them which are still sought after today because of their originality of approach and the wide variety of their contributors. Wallon was closely involved in the preparation of these issues as he considered that leisure-time management was of great importance for the socialization of children and for the full development of their personalities. He likewise had a direct hand in the founding and development of children's centers, such as the 'Renouveau', the centers for activity methods in education called the 'Grande Cordée', and he also presided over a 'Young People's Cinema Association' and a programme of low-cost holidays for children.

During his fourteen years at the helm of *Enfance*, Wallon was always anxious to increase its readership and to find both national and foreign contributors. The journal accordingly featured, alongside articles by renowned psychologists, contributions by neurophysiologists, sociologists, psychiatrists and psychoanalysts, many of whom were appearing in print for the first time.

## Wallon on Rousseau

Wallon's last piece of writing was an 'Introduction to *Emile*' by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. As he himself acknowledged, there was nothing surprising about the choice, since of all Rousseau's writings it was 'still of topical interest to educators, for whom it was intended.'<sup>42</sup>

We still have to understand and explain why it enjoyed such a reputation. Wallon takes up the challenge, seeking to track down and analyze in Rousseau's work the 'bewildering ambiguities alongside the profound observations and cogent truths,'<sup>43</sup> and not failing to note that 'here teacher and pupil are purely imaginary beings created by the author for the purposes of demonstration. However shocking certain ways of proceeding may seem in themselves, there is no reason to dwell unduly on these practices as they all belong to the realm of fiction.'<sup>44</sup>

Having expressed these reservations, he analyzes Rousseau's educational theory in detail, highlighting several of its 'constant principles' and, primarily, 'the child's imprescriptible right that the present should not be sacrificed to the future.'<sup>45</sup> He then quotes from the closing pages of *Emile* in which Rousseau, 'in a moving appeal', writes: 'Let us make people happy at all ages lest after much care they should die without having known happiness'. A second principle follows from this, according to which 'all teaching should be accepted with pleasure, should be wanted and desired, should cater to a need or interest and should help to solve a difficulty encountered by the child.'<sup>46</sup> A third principle ensues to the effect that 'all teaching must be predicated on practical observation and experimentation.'<sup>47</sup> Wallon makes a comparison between Rousseau's and Decroly's pedagogical thinking and, more generally, of the proponents of 'activity methods' in the twentieth century.

But more than anything else, the constant opposition established by Rousseau between nature and society arouses a response in Wallon who returns to it repeatedly to show that the very concept of ‘nature’ in Rousseau is tainted with ambiguity. ‘Where does nature lie—in things or in people’s minds?’<sup>48</sup> It was, of course, from Condillac’s theory of sensationalism, very fashionable during his time, that Rousseau drew the principles of a teaching method of which traces would be found a century and a half later in the ideas of Maria Montessori. But Wallon dwells particularly on Rousseau’s analysis of ‘a stage that present-day psychologists have described as the child’s ‘categorical activity’.’ Practical intelligence was therefore the ‘raw material of theoretical intelligence’ and ‘intellectual life is rooted in the senses.’<sup>49</sup>

It is obvious to Wallon that when Rousseau asserts that ‘freedom consists in not depending on others’, whereas ‘society reduces human beings to the natural state of childhood’, he again expresses ‘the two terms of the contradiction without trying to resolve it, or he simply notes the existence of a paradox.’<sup>50</sup>

Wallon gives full vent to his irritation when, at the conclusion of this introduction, he analyses the picture painted by Rousseau of the relations between the sexes and shows that ‘where the issue of women is concerned, our contemporary civilization has turned away from Rousseau’s ideas.’<sup>51</sup>

Should Rousseau’s principles be regarded as generally progressive, if not revolutionary? From this close reading of a work written in the period between *La Nouvelle Héloïse* and *Du Contrat Social*, Wallon draws the conclusion that

what was most authentically revolutionary in Rousseau was his cast of mind, his love of controversy. He found pleasure in paradoxes that ran counter to commonly held views, he was attentive to contrasts that brought out diversity and change, he was fond of contradictions that gave food for thought and of antagonisms that triggered action. He had a dialectical mind although he was not yet using dialectics as a method of investigation and explanation.<sup>52</sup>

## Wallon today: little more than a name

It may be wondered why Wallon is still little more than a name, if indeed that, to many present-day authors and why he is seldom listed in scientific bibliographies.

He produced some ten books that have been re-issued many times. He wrote several hundred articles, and translations of his works exist in Arabic, English, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish, to mention only those languages.

He wrote for various kinds of reader and the least significant of his writings bears witness to an exceptionally broad culture and an unflinching curiosity about contemporary scientific developments. The greatest specialists in his fields paid him tributes during his lifetime and after his death. These included not only psychiatrists, psychologists, and educators, but also sociologists and linguists. They all highlighted his main concern, which was to achieve a better understanding of children and of their physical and psychological development and educational needs. It was perhaps the indissoluble link that he established between these two approaches that gave rise to a good deal of incomprehension and misunderstanding. To some, he seemed a difficult author, bent on finding the right word, the exact term, ever mindful of empirical verification; to others he seemed mainly concerned about the translation of his observations into educational praxis and, more than anything else, preoccupied by the activity of teaching.

Throughout his life Wallon was a politically committed person and this political commitment, of which from the time he was a student he made no secret, was responsible for a certain coolness on the part of the scientific community and cost him a number of friendships. But he was not a person to go back on his choices, even if at times they seemed to him difficult to assume. This readiness to defend causes that he considered just was apparent all his life. He was relentless in his

involvement from the early days of socialism with Jaurès and at the Vallée Foundation in Bicêtre, during and after the 1914-18 war alongside seriously wounded soldiers and with young maladjusted people or delinquents locked up in children's prisons, during the Spanish War, and later in the Resistance.

With the return of peace, he was briefly Minister of Education and then for a while he was a member of the parliament. Finally, in the last fifteen years of his life, he lent his name and prestige to all the national independence struggles and, on the very eve of his death (in December 1962), signed a manifesto for peace in Algeria.

He continued untiringly to demonstrate the same energy and determination when speaking of the duties and responsibilities of the educator as he had in his earliest public statement, addressed to his pupils at a prize-giving ceremony at the secondary school in Bar-le-Duc (1903): 'Does not living for others mean living intensely, braving the death that lies hidden in the recesses of egotism, condensing every instant of our existence into a noble endeavor? Does it not represent our independence?'<sup>53</sup>

More than fifty years later, the message he addressed to primary school teachers was the same, marked more strongly by experience and the problems of the times:

Teachers who are truly aware of the responsibilities entrusted to them must take a stand on the issues of the day. They must take a stand, not blindly but in the light of what they can find out by virtue of their education. They must take a stand so that they can truly discover the social relations and moral values of the age. They must take a stand not only in their studies and not only through analysis of the economic and social conditions of their time and country. They must take a stand side by side with their pupils, learning from them about their living conditions, for instance. In this way teachers must be constantly trying out ideas and must modify their own through permanent contact with a shifting reality of which each life forms a part and which must be harnessed to the common ideal.<sup>54</sup>

## Notes

1. *Hélène Gratiot-Alphandéry (France)*. Director of the Educational Psychology Laboratory and Assistant Director of the Laboratory of Child Psychology and Biology at the Ecole pratique des hautes études en sciences sociales (Paris). Former Director of the teaching and research unit at the Institute of Psychology of the University of Paris V. Secretary-General of the UNICEF Advisory Group for the journal *Enfance* since its foundation in 1948. Author or co-author of numerous publications including: *Lectures d'Henri Wallon* [Henri Wallon's Lectures]; *Traité de psychologie de l'enfant* [Treatise on Child Psychology]; and *Psychologies modernes* [Modern Psychologies].
2. Henri Wallon, 'Inaugural Lecture at the Collège de France,' *Enfance* (Evry, France), Nos. 3-4, May-October 1959, p. 195.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 198.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
5. Commission ministérielle d'étude, *Projet de réforme de l'enseignement* (Projet Paul Langevin-Henri Wallon) [Draft Educational Reform (Project by Paul Langevin and Henri Wallon)], Paris, Ministère de l'éducation nationale, 1946, p. 8.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
19. *Ibid.*

20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 21.
22. Ibid., p. 23.
23. Ibid., p. 25.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., p. 26.
26. Henri Wallon, 'Pourquoi des psychologues scolaires?' [Why Do We Need School Psychologists?], *Enfance* (Evry, France), Vol. 5, 1952, p. 374.
27. Ibid.
28. Commission ministérielle d'étude, op. cit., p. 36.
29. Henri Wallon, in G. Dumas (ed.), *Traité de psychologie* [Treatise on Psychology], vol. 7, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 1942, p. 429.
30. Ibid., p. 506.
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- 1959. 'Psychologie et éducation de l'enfant' [Psychology and Education of the Child]. (A Collection of articles by Henri Wallon published from 1928 to 1958.)
- 1963. 'Buts et méthodes de la psychologie' [Objectives and Methods of Psychology]. (A new collection of articles.)
- 1968. 'Ecrits et souvenirs' [Writings and Memories]. (Texts by Wallon on authors of his choice.)
- 1979. 'Centenaire d'Henri Wallon' [The Centenary of Henri Wallon] (Papers on the work of Henri Wallon presented at the International Congress on Child Psychology.)
- 1993. 'Henri Wallon parmi nous' [Henri Wallon among Us]. (Texts on Wallon published on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of his death.)

## Tributes to Henri Wallon

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