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## Educational Innovation and Contemporary Culture



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### Introduction

This entry sets out to outline the historical meaning of educational innovation in contemporary society, as well as to trace certain distinctive features of one and the other, contrasting with some traditional conceptions of education. For this, in the first section, we will approach the conception of education linked to the transmission of a culture's traditional contents, a conception that opposes the concept of educational innovation. In the second section, we posit that, despite the previous opposition, educational innovation can be understood as a new tradition which is characteristic of the twentieth century and which emanates from the social, technological, and, above all, economic dynamism of the capitalist model. Finally, we address the problem related to one of contemporary society's particular features, based on the "structural revolution of value" concept introduced by Jean Baudrillard, according to which different forms of meanings for value are characterized precisely by having freed themselves from fixed and absolute referents, maintaining the mere meaning of change, within

which the model of innovation is inserted as the axis of contemporary conceptions of education.

### Education as Cultural Inheritance

Education is eminently a social phenomenon. Émile Durkheim emphasized, in *Éducation et sociologie*, the relevance of education as a link between the individual and society, to the extent of considering that because of it the supposed antagonism between both was actually apparent, given that it is the action that shapes the individual's natural and corporal being, adapting it to social and historically determined needs. This action is essential when defining education. Therefore, trying to definite it based on the ideals proposed by an educational system is inadequate, because more than a definition of what the term "education" means, what it does is highlight the same values founded by the social model. To understand the meaning that education holds both for society and the individual, it is not enough to indicate if it is aimed towards the liberation of the individual, the achievement of his happiness, its attachment to a specific religious doctrine, a physical preparation for war, or the acquisition of scientific knowledge of the time. The model that an educational system proposes does not define what education is, but only establishes the ideals that are defined based on the needs of said society.