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**Abstract**

Through a study of a privately funded and ambitious inquiry into the education system of the United States, the relations between the development of comparative education as an activity and the governing of education systems in the early 20th century can be illuminated. The relations and interests of early comparativists were mobilized and enhanced by private funding and significant numbers of public actors in education were involved in comparative inquiry. The 1903 Mosely Commission was a philanthropic intervention to reengineer the patchwork of English education, and an attempt to modernize it and influence its government on a large scale. Its innovation was in its methods of influence as well as its scientific reports. The Commission was a hybrid, transnational institution, using comparison to modernize the government of education, mainly involving policy actors and finally, claimed neither by the history or comparative study of education. Consequently, its significance has been lost. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)