The Global Reception of John Dewey’s Thought
Multiple Refractions Through Time and Space

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and the Intersection of Catholicism

The Cases of the Institución Libre de
Enseñanza and the Thesis of Father
Alberto Hurtado, S.J. on Dewey

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In his study of the reception of John Dewey’s ideas in Spain and Spanish America, Donoso made the point that “Dewey attracted those educators in Latin America, as well as in Spain, who were anti-traditional in their educational practices, mostly liberal in politico-social reforms, and advocates of secular traditions (which in many cases, meant being anti-clerical).”¹ This was to a great extent the case of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza (ILE) (Free Teaching Institute). The ILE was an educational organization which, founded by Francisco Giner de los Ríos in 1876 with the aim of freeing education from the state and the Catholic Church, embraced political liberalism, the philosophy of Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781–1832), and the pedagogical ideas of Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Institución turned to Dewey as an inspiring source for educational innovation and social transformation. However, the dissemination and articulation of Dewey’s ideas in various historical spaces did not follow a simple trajectory. The reading that Chilean Jesuit Priest Alberto Hurtado (1901–1952) made of John Dewey in his doctoral thesis, defended at the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium) in 1935, provides a compelling example. Father Hurtado read Dewey through the lenses of the doctrine of the Catholic Church and neo-Thomism tinted by the “spirit of Louvain” and his own vision of Catholic spirituality, his search for a vision of the humane, and his passionate commitment to social change.² The actual presence on the Chilean political scene of new educational ideas and of John Dewey’s writings in the midst of social and political upheaval provided Hurtado with a motivation for his alternative reading of Dewey, whose ideas were not acceptable to the ecclesiastical hierarchy.³ By the same token, the École de Pedagogie et de Psychologie Appliqué à
l'Éducation of the Catholic University of Louvain that had been founded in 1923 provided the intellectual Catholic context. Hurtado’s interpretation of Dewey’s ideas reached a large audience through the articles he wrote, public seminars, classes, and his involvement with the Colegio San Ignacio in Santiago and the Pontificia Catholic University. Father Hurtado was a public figure.5

In this chapter, we explore the reading of Dewey’s work by those related to the Institución Libre de Enseñanza (Spain) and by Father Hurtado (Chile). We situate the readings in relation to the political, educational, and religious ideas of the time, ideas that functioned as mediating configurations with an unstable quality.6 The intersection of Catholicism was relevant in the two spaces although the mediations were substantially different. Both readings purposely separated Dewey’s pedagogical thinking from his pragmatist philosophy. However, while Father Hurtado did a Catholic reading to articulate Dewey’s pedagogical thinking with religious transcendence, the members of the Institución read Dewey motivated by the desire to free education from religious dogmatism but still kept a transcendental vision of the human being.

INTERNATIONAL FLOWS, INTERSECTIONS AND MEDIATIONS IN THE FORMATION OF LOCALLY ROOTED CONFIGURATIONS OF IDEAS

Historical Contexts: Profiling the Spaces of Reception

The Institución Libre de Enseñanza was the core of one of the most important movements of renewal of education in Spain at the turn of the twentieth century. It expounded the values of progressive liberalism in a political and ethical sense and was related in a rather direct way to many pedagogical projects that aimed at modernizing the educational system. Originally, in its early days, the educational project of the Institución was based on the philosophy of Krause and the pedagogy of Froebel, influences that were synthesized in the formula: education of the human being as human. The philosophy of Krause had been brought to Spain in the mid-nineteenth century by Julián Sanz del Río. In the generations that followed, Krausism, as the Catalan philosopher and pedagogue Joaquín Xirau wrote, became a moral discipline that defended freedom of conscience and research rather than a closed system. There, Xirau stated, “one can find among the members Hegelians, Kantians, positivists . . . Catholics, freethinkers . . . It only detested the opaque and ankylosed bones of decadent scholasticism.”7

The introduction of Krausism by Sanz del Río was not a capricious decision nor a despicable sign of poor intellect as the conservative intellectual circles, concerned with the threat to traditional values, argued. Instead, the conditions for the reception of these ideas were there. The humanistic,
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mystical, and even explicit religious elements present in Krause's harmonious rationalism made his ideas appealing to Spain. Solomon Lipp summarized the conditions for reception well when he wrote: "[The] Spanish intellectual while rebelling against what they considered to be theological dogmatism, nevertheless experienced a need to fill a spiritual vacuum. Krausism seemed to be the answer: it represented reason, moral rectitude, and freedom, as opposed to what these intellectuals viewed as corruption, hypocrisy and absolutism." The members of the Institución saw in the harmonious rationalism of Krause an open door to a free and sincere religiosity compatible with an open Catholicism in intimate relationship with God and the world and with a strong sense of humanity.

This religious attitude of the Spanish Krausists was broken by the conservative radicalization of the Church hierarchy during the papacy of Pius IX, who rejected freedom of conscience and the autonomy of reason in the Syllabus of 1864, and by the approval of the dogma of the infallibility of the pope at the First Vatican Council that concluded in 1870. Many Krausists, among them Giner de los Ríos, who professed an anti-dogmatic Catholicism, which was compatible with freedom of conscience and religious pluralism, could not conciliate their trust in freedom, reason, and progress with the position of the Church. They left the Church. Abellán underlined the importance of this moment and its influence on subsequent generations of Spanish intellectuals when he wrote: "The Krausist crisis is historical because it means a crisis of the Spanish conscience. From this moment it is not justifiable to identify Spanish thought with Catholicism for the exceptions were many, and in many occasions, they pertained to the highest expressions of culture or philosophy." Elías Díaz, in his classical study entitled La Filosofía Social del Krausismo Español (The Social Philosophy of Spanish Krausism), stressed, beside the moral basis discussed earlier, a political one that would also explain the reception of the Krausist philosophy. This political basis was the exaltation of the individual, which was coherent with the political organicism of Spanish progressive liberalism, and the rejection of excessive state intervention. But the political militancy of the members of the Institución was not unwavering. The skepticism of the reforms from above sanctioned by the first members was followed in later generations by a more favorable attitude toward political intervention, often accompanied by an explicit closeness to socialist positions. This was the case of the two main disseminators of Dewey's thought, Domingo Barnés and Lorenzo Luzuriaga. Barnés was Sub-Secretary of Public Instruction twice, and Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts for a few months during the Second Republic that went from 1931 to 1936. As Minister, he had to enforce the principle of secular education included in the 1931 Constitution. Luzuriaga belonged to the Liga de Educación Política (League for Political Educational) founded by José Ortega y Gasset and Manuel Azaña in 1913, and to the Escuela Nueva (New School) of Núñez de Arenas linked to the
Spanish Socialist Worker’s Party. Luzuriaga embodied the socialist idea of a public, secular, and common school.

The reception and reading of Dewey’s ideas were conditioned by the history of the Institución and its configuration of ideas deeply rooted in Spanish and even European history. The moral humanistic background of the first Spanish Krausists led to a smooth reading of pragmatism, to put it in terms close to the expression the Spanish thinker Eugenio D’Ors used when he referred to the French philosopher Emile Boutoux’s reading of James. Not all the members of the Institución were equally Krausists and the influence of this philosophy lost strength toward the beginning of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, its influence would continue to be present in the way the Institución approached Dewey. At the same time, the liberalism of the first Krausists left room for a more political commitment, which in turn favored a politically and socially oriented reading.

Father Alberto Hurtado, a member of the Society of Jesus, canonized Saint by Benedict XVI in Rome in 2005, has an important place in Chile’s imagery as a social educator committed to the poor, the education of young people as social leaders, and the organization of workers. He was the founder of the Hogar de Cristo (1944) for homeless children, young people, and adults. Father Hurtado understood, in his formative years at the University of Louvain, the political presence of new educational ideas in Chile and the weight of Dewey’s ideas. His reading of Dewey became part of a complex configuration of ideas, developed in part as a response to world views expounded by socialists, communists, and the representatives of the Radical Party which emerged in the nineteenth century and proclaimed “uncompromisingly liberal-democratic opinions, heightened later on by a note of fervent anticlericalism.” The latter had much to do with the connections between Radicals and freemasonry. Why re-orient the reading of Dewey to a Catholic perspective?

New educational ideas had currency in Chile in the 1920s and 1930s. They appealed to the General Association of Teachers, which played a leading role as a collective actor in educational change between 1923 and 1928. In 1928, Chile underwent a unique experience implementing the concepts of the ‘new pedagogy’ into the entire public system. It lasted eight months. The leaders of the Association were inspired by an array of educators such as Decroly, Kerschensteiner, Dewey, Kilpatrick, Agustin Nieto Caballero, and Marxists teachers working in Soviet Russia such as Pistrack, Pinkevich, and Chasky. The changes represented a drastic ‘rupture,’ that although short, had repercussions for the future. Meanwhile, the socio-political crisis that accompanied the international economic depression of 1929 gave life, even if for a short time (from 4 June to 13 September 1932), to the “socialist republic of Chile.” The ruptures and discontinuities were as dramatic as they were brief. No less important, under the Radical Party, the Constitution of 1925 separated church and state, and the government agreed to pay the Church a subsidy. The new situation, although accepted

The Readings of Dewey’s Works with reluctance by the Chilean Catholic Church in Chilean life, the influence of Dewey gained pre-eminence at the time by the social gospel movement led by Dario Salas (who translated Dewey’s works) and his students, the all of the National Action Party (liberal) and with Catholic Party (conservative). Salas developed ties with the Pope and other countries. They are also members of the National Action Party (conservative) and the Catholic Church, yet another reading of Dewey to be developed by the post-revolutionary Mexican Church. Dewey’s notion of localism, in the case of the Catholic Church, referred to the greater community of Christians.

Although the Catholic Church in Chile was anti-modernist and anti-revolutionary, its teachings on poverty, misery, and exploitation were consistent with those of popes such as Leo XIII and Pius XI, who were concerned with the western economic and social conditions. The Catholic Church was the main driving force of the traditionalist movement, which sought to renew the Catholic Church in Chile. It was a movement led by Father Hurtado, who was canonized by Benedict XVI in 2005. Hurtado’s spiritual formation and his work in the Catholic Church were inspired by the teachings of the Church, and he developed a social apostolate based on the traditionalist values of the Church. Hurtado’s work was part of a larger movement of renewal in the Catholic Church, which sought to respond to the challenges of modernity and the social issues of the time.

Between 1925 and 1936, another important figure in the Catholic Church in Chile was Manuel Larraín Errázuriz. He was ordained as a priest in 1929 and later served as a bishop in the Chilean Church. Larraín Errázuriz was known for his work in education and his support for the Catholic Church’s teachings on social issues. He was influential in the development of the Catholic Church’s social apostolate, which sought to address the social problems of the time, such as poverty and inequality. Larraín Errázuriz’s work was part of a larger movement of renewal in the Catholic Church, which sought to respond to the challenges of modernity and the social issues of the time.
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Although the Catholic Church was traditionally allied to the conserva ines in Chile, progressive Catholic leaders had seen the need to address the poverty, misery, and exploitation dominant in Chilean society. The social teachings of popes such as Leo XIII and Pius XI had conveyed suspicion of western economic and social arrangements and built on a Catholic communitarian tradition. At the beginning of the twentieth century the social doctrine of the Church was taught in Chile, and Christian social thought started to inform the work of a number of leaders of the Church and their social work. Particularly relevant here is R. P. Fernando Vives del Solar S.J. Vives developed a social apostolate, which was not always to the liking of traditional Chilean Catholics, the Company of Jesus, and the clergy, and had to endure long periods of exile.18 This Jesuit had great influence on Alberto Hurtado's spiritual formation and his commitment to the social Christian renewal movement that that reached a critical point in the 1930s.19

Between 1925 and 1936, away from Chile during his intellectual and reli-gious formation, Alberto Hurtado maintained correspondence with Fathers Vives, Manuel Larrain Errázuriz (future bishop of Talca), and others. He studied pedagogy at Louvain following the insinuation from the rector of the Theologate, Jean-Baptiste Janssens, S.J., known for his commitment to a social apostolate.20 Not surprisingly, by the time Hurtado returned to Chile, a group of dissidents from the old conservative party, close to the Catholic Church, had started the Falange Nacional, the precursor of the Christian Democratic Party which was founded in 1957. The leaders were inspired by the social encyclicals of the Papacy and in particular by the social and political philosophy of Jacques Maritain.21 They were also motivated by the need to reconcile Catholicism with liberal modernity. Meanwhile, the notion of 'popular front' had reached Chile, and the alliance of the Radical, Democratic, Socialist, and Communist parties along with the Confederation of Workers would win the election in 1938. It was against this context that Alberto Hurtado analyzed Dewey in his thesis entitled Le système pédagogique de Dewey devant les exigences de la doctrine catholique that he defended in 1935.
The École de Pédagogie and the Laboratoire de Pédagogie Expérimentale at the Catholic University of Louvain placed emphasis on experimental pedagogy concerned with the neutral side of education and in particular the teaching processes, methods, and means—educational, ends were the domain of theology—which allowed an articulation with Catholic doctrines. Hurtado’s doctoral supervisor was Raymond Buyse, a student of O. Decroly with whom he worked, traveled in the United States, and who in 1928, founded the Laboratoire. However, although Hurtado was as concerned with scientific method as his supervisor, his interest was in line with education as a means for individual and social transformation.

In 1936, he started his multi-pronged approach to realize his spiritual apostolic vocation as a Catholic priest committed to a social gospel. The critical examination of Dewey’s ideas from a Catholic perspective opened an avenue for Catholics to explore modern ideas in education. It was also a medium for Hurtado to explore critically a vision of the humane and the redemptive character of Christian social education in the context of modernity. He understood the need to reconcile the Catholic tradition with emergent ideas in education and science, and did not shy away from engaging the notions of scientific method (articulated by Dewey as a systematic exercise of empirical intelligence), democratic community, and social morality. We will focus on Hurtado’s reading of Dewey in his doctoral thesis with some reference to other writings.

**THE READINGS**

The readers of Dewey in Spain wanted to reform education and found it imperative to challenge a Catholic Church that kept control over education. Dewey was brought to Spain by Domingo Barnés to help establish Dewey’s ideas as part of the conceptual tools of paidology. Domingo Barnés belonged to the young generation of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza. Influenced by Claparède’s functional psychology, Barnés was one of the proponents of the study of child psychology and child pedagogy (known as paidology). Claparède had written the introduction to a compilation of Dewey’s writings entitled *L’école et l’enfant*, translated by Pidoux, which is considered the first study in French of the pedagogy of John Dewey, which in turn was partially published in Spanish in the Boletín de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza in 1922. Claparède undertook a psycho-pedagogical reading of Dewey centered on three characteristics: genetic, functional, and social. He is very explicit about the separation of Dewey’s pedagogy and psychology from pragmatism. The transcription in Spanish of Claparède read:

> With regard to education, one can place Dewey’s pedagogy among impartial spirits.

But, let us leave pragmatism even if it is its faithful expression. Dewey himself does not mention it even once and the latter could be from a biologist who would not be a philosopher.

Barnés, one of the first disseminators of Dewey’s teaching in Spain, kept a close relationship with the University of Louvain that Claparède had founded. That was how Barnés, who published in Spanish Dewey’s pedagogy with the title *El niño y el aprendizaje*, which was the first chapter of *Science and Democracy* prologued. The prologue is based on *L’enseignement de l’enfant*. In 1926, Barnés translated and published a compilation of Dewey’s writings (*El niño y la escuela. Escritos de John Dewey*). Barnés, who had been made by Claparède:

> Claparède is right when he says that pedagogy is a close expression of pragmatism to the fate of that doctrine. We did not even name it in his class.

Lorenzo Luzuriaga was the second and the most prominent figure through the Institución Libre de Enseñanza in the newspaper *El Sol*, in which he placed the Spanish translation of the *Pedagogy of the Aesthetic Education* as part of the functional aspect of Dewey’s pedagogy. In 1925 with the title *El niño y el aprendizaje*, he included a reference to Claparède’s introduction to the Spanish translation of *The Child Is the Center* in 1921 with the title *El niño y el aprendizaje*. He characterized indicated by Claparède’s pedagogy as active, vital, and mindful of the becoming, reading with a reference to Kerschensteiner in Germany in 1913: “Among the creators of the modern principle of the active school movement, Kerschensteiner’s conception of the child was.

Those mediations were articulated by Barnés who went beyond Claparède in understanding Dewey’s pedagogy was social “not only because of its overall character...
with regard to education, on the contrary, it seems to generate consensus among impartial spirits.

But, let us leave pragmatism alone. The psycho-pedagogy of Dewey, even if it is its faithful expression, is not tied to the fate of this doctrine. Dewey himself does not mention this word in his entire educative work, even once and the latter could have been conceived by a psychologist or a biologist who would never have had a concern with theoretical philosophy.28

Barnés, one of the first disseminators of Dewey and pragmatism in Spain, kept a close relationship with Claparède and with the J.J. Rousseau Institute that Claparède had founded in Geneva. In 1915, Barnés translated and published in Spanish Dewey’s paper, “The School and Social Progress,”29 which was the first chapter of School and Society that Barnés translated and prologued. The prologue is based on Claparède’s introduction to L’école et l’enfant. In 1926, Barnés translated and wrote the prologue for another compilation of Dewey’s writings that he entitled La Escuela y el Niño (The School and the Child).30 Barnés refers here again to the characterization made by Claparède:

Claparède is right when he asserts that, even if Dewey’s psycho-pedagogy is a close expression of pragmatism, its fate is not tied in any way to the fate of that doctrine. It is curious and symptomatic that Dewey did not even name it in his entire philosophical work.31

Lorenzo Luzuriaga was the second great disseminator of Dewey’s ideas through the Institución Libre de Enseñanza. In an article published in 1918 in the newspaper El Sol, in which he announces the forthcoming publication of the Spanish translation of Schools of Tomorrow, Luzuriaga stressed the functional aspect of Dewey’s pedagogy. Later on, in the introduction to the Spanish translation of The Child and the Curriculum, published in 1925 with the title El Niño y el Programa Escolar, he wrote that with the exception of Claparède’s introduction “we do not know any other work on Dewey’s pedagogical ideas.” He also referred once more to the three characteristics indicated by Claparède quoted previously, to which he then added: active, vital, and mindful of the personality of the child. He supported this reading with a reference to Kerschensteiner, with whose ideas he became familiar in Germany in 1913: “Indeed, John Dewey can be considered one of the creators of the modern ‘active school.’ Nobody has defended the principle of the active school more than him. He coincided on this with Kerschensteiner’s conception of the ‘school for work.’”32

Those mediations were articulated with other readings and interests. Barnés went beyond Claparède in his social interpretation of Dewey, whose pedagogy was social “not only because it is functional, as Claparède said, but because of its overall characteristics.”33 Luzuriaga, who put great
emphasis on the translation and circulation of Dewey's work, went even further in his political and social reading of Dewey.

Father Hurtado used the same paragraph from Claparède as Barnés did to support, along with other sources, his thesis that Dewey's pedagogical system is not grounded in his pragmatic philosophy of experimentalism (as Hurtado liked to call it), which was incompatible with the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Claparède also said in his introduction to *L'École et l'enfant* that if we move pragmatism to psychology, it becomes conflated with the experimental method.\(^{34}\) Hurtado further argues that Dewey developed his pedagogical ideas before becoming a pragmatist.\(^{35}\) *My Pedagogic Creed* has an important place in Hurtado's analysis although he makes reference to Dewey's main works until 1935.

Father Hurtado conceived the gospel as a social gospel and, as the American representatives of traditional Protestantism who embraced the social gospel tradition did, he thought of a socialized religious education, and a socialized individual. In that he coincided with modern educational aims. However, while pragmatism did not seem to be a problem for Protestant religious educators of the time such as George A. Coe, who fully integrated Dewey's ideas with the social gospel in his quest for a democracy of God, for Hurtado, it was. He gave the priest a mediating role in the generation of social consciousness and rejected the idea that pragmatism was at the root of progressive education and Dewey's theories. Dewey's philosophical position centered on the inevitability of uncertainty conflicted with the notion of the Church as the depository of truth, even as freedom of conscience was central to Hurtado's argument. Dewey's rejection of dualism was no less problematic, given its centrality to the Catholic theology of the time and often expressed in the dualistic understanding of body and soul. For Protestant social gospellers like Coe, practice in experiencing fellowship with the Divine whole would secure moral power to attain new ideals. Among Protestant social gospellers, the unresolved issue of transcendence was somewhat smoothed by the emphasis on religious experience and by psychological principles rooted in theories of American pragmatism.\(^{36}\)

The reading that Hurtado made of Dewey was also political and was in line with the liberal humanism of Jacques Maritain and with the Catholic political and social reformist projects that sectors of the Church had started to articulate in Chile.\(^{37}\) Dewey provided Hurtado with a pedagogical theory aiming at social transformation and a critique of the individualist character of education. Hurtado was convinced that the social problem in Chile was an educational one.\(^{38}\) He wrote in 1942 that in order to elevate the Chilean people, in particular the dispossessed, to a spiritual vision of life, one had to begin by educating the people. Education for Hurtado had a redemptive dimension that needed to be understood in relation to his own profound vocation to reach those who suffered, the poor, and the young as revealed in his work as founder and worker of the Hogar de Cristo. He did not separate education from social morality, or in other words, from the duties toward fellow human beings and the teaching of the Church, which made him vulnerable to criticism as the conveyor of dangerous ideas, the Company of Jesus.\(^{40}\)

There are important components as congruent with Catholic teaching oriented toward life (he asserted) as the development of “a spirit in the classroom, and emphasis on instilling the social virtues.” Dewey's emphasis on the social and moral life, which is not the result of a rationalistic understanding of intelligent action, contains an idea of justice or its absence.\(^{41}\) His position is close to Dewey's. But in line with his Catholic faith, the light that is an intellectual, conscious duty of the teacher is to place the light to facilitate the light to become bright point—and not too far from Dewey's to the rather dominant, conformity of the time, in which attachment observances, and permissions were taken. But what Dewey lacked to personal internal light guiding the manifestation in humans of the Divine.

The understanding of the role of the child to acquire more experience by the conception of the teacher as the state, and the family, all of which was educating the child. In Hurtado's child-centered and the subjects of child, but there was a mediating function. Education had a spiritual dimension within the parameters of the Catholic Church.

In both cases examined here, one of the Chilean Father Hurtado, the need to reintegrate ideas into co-
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The duties toward fellow humans that are rooted in the Christian message and the teaching of the Church. Needs to say, Hurtado’s conceptions made him vulnerable to criticism within the Church and he was even construed as the conveyor of dangerous ideas, they generated tensions within the Company of Jesus.

There are important components of Dewey’s theories that Hurtado saw as congruent with Catholic teachings, for example, an educational process oriented toward life (he asserted that education is life), reflective thinking, the development of “a spirit inclined to observation,” wise scepticism of precipitated conclusions and of “exaggerated dogmatism,” freedom in the classroom, and emphasis on internal motivation. Dewey’s active and realistic understanding of intelligence and its power to transform reality, and Dewey’s emphasis on the social responsibility of individuals were fruitful insights in Hurtado’s assessment. He saw the value of considering the “union of intellectual and moral life” and “the social character of any social life,” which is not the result of a will extrinsic to the subject. Nonetheless, the theoretical bases underlying both principles were in his view semi-true (demi vraie) since they lacked the supernatural dimension. In his view, moral life shouldn’t be based on a law totally extrinsic to the subject, a law that should be obeyed because it was commanded, even if that law did not contain an idea of justice or its raison d’être was not evident. In that, his position is close to Dewey’s. But Hurtado developed the argument further in line with his Catholic faith. He wrote in his thesis that the “moral attitude is an intellectual, conscious one and comes from a personal light; the duty of the teacher is to place the child in such an environment that would facilitate the light to become brighter and brighter.” This is an interesting point—and not too far from Dewey—since it seems to represent a challenge to the rather dominant, conformed patterns of institutionalized Christianity of the time, in which attachment to rules based on rites, prohibitions, observances, and permissions was stressed as a means to spiritual perfection. But what Dewey failed to acknowledge, Hurtado said, was that that personal internal light guiding the conscience, light of reason, moral law, is the manifestation in humans of the order of things created by God.

The understanding of the role of the teacher as a guide who helped the child to acquire more experiences and “discover the truth” was paralleled by the conception of the teacher as representing the authority of the Church, the state, and the family, all of whom were charged by God with the task of educating the child. In Hurtado’s thinking, the learning practice had to be child-centered and the subjects organized following the psychology of the child, but there was a mediating spiritual attitude in the learning process. Education had a spiritual dimension for Hurtado that he tried to articulate within the parameters of the Catholic Church.

In both cases examined here, the Spanish members of the Institución and the Chilean Father Hurtado, there is a mediated reading of Dewey that led to reintegration of ideas into configurations in the making. The treatment
of the notions of growth, experience, and, in particular, democracy exemplifies the separation from Dewey’s philosophical matrix and the “impurity” of the reception. Within the context of the convulsive Spanish reality of the first decades of the twentieth century, Barnés and Luzuriaga looked into Dewey’s writings in search of ideas to support pedagogical, social, and political projects in the making. The historical intellectual background led to a reading that separated pragmatism from the pedagogical theories. Thus, this separation led to a transcendentalist reading of Dewey, in which the notion of growth became self-realization, unfolding. This “conversion” allowed Barnés to relate Dewey’s pedagogy with Krause’s philosophy for which “the realization of the individual’s own essence was also an ethical goal for that individual” and with Rousseauistic naturalism. With reference to the latter, Barnés wrote: “When preparing children, the first goal should be to perform their mission as human beings. And Dewey would fully subscribe to these words, with the only proviso that humans are social beings who can only fulfill their mission and destiny in society through actions and reactions.”

These readings neglect to consider Dewey’s notion that in education there are no external goals guiding the process, essence to realize, or a destiny to fulfill. As Oelkers has indicated, Dewey kept the concept of growth, but with a radically different meaning from the one it had in previous pedagogical theories. He moved it away from the organic concept of growth on one side, and from finalistic conceptions of development, on the other. The distinction was clear in Chapter 5 of Democracy and Education that was translated by Luzuriaga and published in various volumes by La Lectura between 1926 and 1927.

The reading of Dewey in Spain, and in particular in the space created by the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, was a political one. It is evident in the case of Luzuriaga through his activity as director of the Revista de Pedagogía, in particular during the times of the Second Republic (1931–1936). The last two works of Dewey that were published in the Revista before it closed in 1936 were “Education and Our Present Social Problems,” a lecture delivered by Dewey at the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction of the National Education Association in Minneapolis on March 1, 1933, and “The Future of Liberalism,” a lecture delivered at the twenty-fourth meeting of the American Philosophical Association in New York City in December 1934.

Nevertheless, Luzuriaga seemed to have difficulties integrating the political reading with the pedagogical one, partly because he did not engage in a reading of pragmatism in an attempt to build the necessary articulation. After the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), Luzuriaga, already in exile, sent Dewey a signed copy of his book Historia de la Educación Pública. In this book, he portrays Dewey as a distinguished champion of democratic education in the world and, with reference to Spain, he noted that “the first manifestations in favour of the democratization of education and of
The Readings of Dewey's Work and the Intersection of Catholicism

The unified school were made by the author of this book from 1914 when he reported the movement of the German Einheitschule and continued with the dissemination of ideas of democratic education in various periodical publications. Democracy refers here to the external organizational dimension of the school system, not to the internal dimension, the work in the classroom as a setting where the conception of democracy is actualized as a community of inquirers as proposed by Dewey.

Father Hurtado paid attention in his thesis to the enactment of democracy in the classroom that could lead to personal and social transformation. His starting point was that new education and Dewey's ideas on pedagogical methods relied on discoveries of the true nature of the child. In his view, the democratic ideal represented a truly Christian view, since it implied changes in social relations favoring equal opportunities and economic equality and a tendency to overcome "what separates and destroys." The notion of cooperation, dominant in progressive education and in Dewey's thought, as well as the thinking of democracy as an ethical ideal, came to mind. However, Hurtado argued that Dewey's democratic ideas were closely related to his experimentalist philosophy, which translated into the notion of education as the continuing reconstruction and re-organization of experience that increased its social meaning. This conception was problematic for him because it embraced a notion of growth that excluded creation and transcendental authority. It did not leave room for a morality that was different from the idea of the autonomous individual, and the only measure of the consequences of our acts was the pragmatic criterion. Hurtado could not accept this conception of democracy because it was based on a purely human conception of society, on human work, and inserted into the social contract with no reference to the character of natural law which was, in his view, intrinsic to social life. Furthermore, he said that it ignored the true aim of human life, which was to serve God. A metaphysical conception of democracy based on experimentalism could not be accepted by a Catholic; the practical and social pedagogical principles would have required another philosophical conception to integrate them. Agnosticism and relativism were Hurtado's obvious problems when dealing with Dewey's notion of morality and social morality, the latter at the core of a democratic society. The incorporation of transcendental truth collided with Dewey's philosophical position that truth is not to be understood in absolute or ultimate terms but rather in the more provisional sense of "warranted assertability." A difficult unresolved problem arises because Hurtado saw the opportunity to use Dewey's methodology to help children discover the moral law, but he needed to make room for the absolute value of truth as revealed.

The pursuit of a progressive practice of freedom, the development of a critical sense, and the pursuit of new experiences all contributed, in Hurtado's view, to educate the conscience and develop character, and were acceptable for a Catholic. The personal, intellectual, reasonable aspect of our moral life has great value, Hurtado wrote, although this is often
forgotten. He went further to say that the mediocre moral education of many Catholics was based on a code of prescriptions, external to them, rather than on the development of the intimate light that is projected over one’s actions. The difference with Dewey is that that light of reason, which is the moral law for Hurtado, is the manifestation to humans of the order of things created by God. Hurtado’s criticism of the limits of institutionalized spirituality is noticeable again and again. This is in line with the spirit of Louvain and a theological renewal that would take full shape later on with the Nouvelle Theologie.

Dewey found resonance in Spain because his writing converged with the aspirations dominant at the time, in particular, his ideas about educational reform and, to some extent, the pragmatic basis of his pedagogy. In the case of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, we cannot talk strictly of antipragmatism. Rather, there was an ambivalent attitude. The representatives of the Institución, as intellectual interpreters of their time, expressed that vital stance (to which James referred in 1906) taken by those who “want a system that will combine both things, the scientific loyalty to facts and willingness to take account of them, the spirit of adaptation and accommodation, in short, but also the old confidence in human values and the resultant spontaneity, whether of the religious or the romantic type.” Pragmatism was James’ response to the tension between what he called tender-minded and tough-minded temperaments; “Krausist positivism,” a way to combine rationalism and experience, was the response of the members of the Spanish Institución Libre de Enseñanza.

Within this tension, Dewey’s pragmatism is inclined toward the empirical world, and for this reason, in his mind as Rorty has pointed out, religion, contrary to James’ position, does not constitute a valid source of knowledge. The members of the Institución defended a free education, a standpoint that led to confrontations with the Catholic Church. However, there was a substantial difference from Dewey because their pedagogical project implied a notion of human- hood that would unfold beyond the given conditions. For that reason they embarked on a transcendentalist reading of Dewey.

The intersection of religion in Hurtado’s reading of Dewey was inevitable. This intersection had a political and historical dimension given the history of Chile and its people, but the reading was done from a confessional perspective with historical intentionality. For Hurtado, the separation of religion and religious experience was another step in the direction of denying the possibility of an intellectual and true knowledge of God (although Hurtado acknowledged that this is an imperfect knowledge), and the negation of the doctrines related to spirituality and the immortality of the soul. The Catholic Church made clear that God could be known through natural reason only.

The issue of transcendence and the status of the transcendent in social life were at the core of the difference. Dewey was a naturalist, while Hurtado’s vision was theo-centric with the proviso that the supernatural was complementary to nature. Hurtado, New Education with some variations, is discussing the teaching of religious tained pedagogical principles that the Church. The first principle was that the components of religious truth, rationality. It was important to show the student was to be aware of the danger morals based on commandments in life would relate to the theological life. The student be placed vis-à-vis the student was up in heaven and was not conforming in life was lived on earth, involved the law, and the psychology of the students. In the clear understanding of the elevation of the student to see how human values unity of the human race, can only be known in the unity of humanists in the

Philosopher Daniel Tröhler has common Faith, humanity forms a transcendentally-based belief that serious totality of being,” the “Universal is in line with the anthropological or have developed, a facility directly justice, equality and freedom.” Because it overcame the dichotomy met the requirements for this view with religious assumptions Dewey’s social philosophy and that, followed developed in A Common Faith. Dewey had everything he needed in the notion of comprehensive community, would not be room for a discussion competent to note that Hurtado saw in humanism: humans took the role of places faith in the creative power seems to be a point of convergence “the social unity of the human race” as analyzed by Tröhler, Catholic perspective. Both perspective. The difference, however, resides and/or transcendental doctrines that to notions of superiority based on otherwise, one would have to make a
complementary to nature. Hurtado wrote articles on Dewey and also on New Education with some variations in the mid-1930s and 1940s. When discussing the teaching of religion in 1947, he discussed a plan that contained pedagogical principles that were innovative for the Chilean Catholic Church. The first principle was the emphasis on the dynamic and functional components of religious truth, rather than on the static and structural components. It was important to show the internal renewal of dogmas. The second was to be aware of the danger of making a religious course a course on morals based on commandments separated from theology. The practice of life would relate to the theological principles. The third principle was that the student be placed *vis-à-vis* the supernatural life which is not realized just in heaven and was not confined to the soul. Instead, the supernatural life was lived on earth, involved the entire being (el hombre (sic) entero) and irradiated into social life. The fourth principle was the consideration of the psychology of the students. In the same article, Hurtado wrote that “A clear understanding of the elevation of nature through grace would help the student to see how human values, the freedom of the person, the social unity of the human race, can only be fully realized in the supernatural life, in the unity of humans (men in the original) with God.”

Philosopher Daniel Tröhler has made the case that in Dewey’s *A Common Faith*, humanity forms a community that is constituted not by a transcendently-based belief that we are all God’s children, but by a “mysterious totality of being,” the “Universe.” Tröhler goes on to say that “this is in line with the anthropological statement that human beings possess, or have developed, a facility directed towards participation and sympathy, justice, equality and freedom.” Dewey’s “comprehensive community,” because it overcame the dichotomy of both supranaturalism and “mechanicalism,” met the requirements for an ideal democracy. Tröhler associates this view with religious assumptions that were in the background of Dewey’s social philosophy and that, following Tröhler’s argument, he explicitly developed in *A Common Faith*. An important question here is whether Dewey had everything he needed in his theory of experience to develop his notion of comprehensive community. If the response is affirmative, there would not be room for a discussion of religious assumptions. It is pertinent to note that Hurtado saw in Dewey’s philosophy a divinization of the humane: humans took the place of God; instead of religion, Dewey openly places faith in the creative power of intelligence. At first glance, there seems to be a point of convergence between the notion of “comprehensive community” as analyzed by Tröhler and Hurtado’s attempt to envision “the social unity of the human race” incorporating transcendence from a Catholic perspective. Both perspectives imply a holistically educated person. The difference, however, resided in Dewey’s rejection of metaphysical and/or transcendental doctrines that would hinder democracy, due in part to notions of superiority based on truth, in particular religious truth. Otherwise, one would have to make a case for the transcendental character of
the notion of comprehensive community as "a mystic totality," a concept used by Tröhler.

CONCLUSION

Dewey’s ideas were often separated from their philosophical basis and integrated in political, philosophical, and theological discourses, thus becoming part of localized configurations of ideas. The pedagogical and political readings led to "mutilated" but living readings of Dewey’s work that generated new variants of progressive education.

Dewey, the author, reacted against partial readings of this writing in *Experience and Education* (1938), claiming that his pedagogical ideas were not just an ensemble of practices to be applied. The following paragraph is illustrative:

I think that only slight acquaintance with the history of education is needed to prove that educational reformers and innovators alone have felt the need for a philosophy of education. Those who adhered to the established system needed merely a few fine-sounding words to justify existing practices. The real work was done by habits which were so fixed as to be institutional. The lesson for progressive education is that it requires in an urgent degree, a degree more pressing than was incumbent upon former innovators, a philosophy of education based upon a philosophy of experience.69

The issue here is that any reception of philosophical and related pedagogical ideas, given the transportation and necessary dissonances of the experiences grounding those ideas, has to generate "impure" outcomes given the contextual configurative elements which were alien to the original formulations. We can certainly say that the readings of Dewey’s writings were "impure" in the spaces of reception we analyze here.

The religious theme is present in the two cases we have examined. Hurtado’s reading of Dewey, an author rejected by the hierarchy of the Church, provided a way for Catholics to incorporate progressive ideas in education in a country where those ideas were part of the secular political imagery. The members of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza read Dewey, having as background the debate on religion and the power of the Catholic Church over education. The idea of transcendence in the case of Hurtado was rooted in the Catholic spirituality and in the doctrine of the Church, in the case of the Institución in the intellectual history of Spain and of the Institución itself, including early reactions to conservative authoritarian approaches of the Catholic Church.

Hurtado and the members of the Spanish Institución made an effort to separate Dewey’s pedagogy from its philosophical foundations. In the case of Hurtado, it was within the notion dominant at Louvain of the separation

The Readings of Dewey’s Work are of means from ends, although his resistance to personal and social transfers articulate ideas and educational ends. This separation responds to the demand not to leave aside the notion of the human to aspire to infinity.70

It is significant that as late as 1931 in Mexico of the Spanish version of the Spanish philosopher, lamented the lack of philosophical work into Spanish. Garcia-Bellido, in the challenge of modernity, which forms a gap between immanence and transcendence with the gap between these two words and God.71 Hurtado could not accept the Creeds of the Institución. It went too far, the free school. However, the proposal was rejected for the lack of an explicit confessional vision of human-hood.

The readings that the members of the Institución and Hurtado made of Dewey’s work in modern terms a concept of education and Dewey understood well these difficulties in *The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy* they are more than abstract logical for predispositions, deeply ingrained attitudes. The two scenarios show not only that what can be integrated in a concept of contingent conditions in the articulations. Perhaps, education, more than absence and modernity could not suppress "the need to articulate a sense of something new beyond continuity, a break and to an untenable ahistoricity.

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of means from ends, although his reading was permeated by his commitment to personal and social transformation and intellectual openness to articulate ideas and educational ends. In the case of the Spanish authors, this separation responds to the demands of a concept of education that cannot leave aside the notion of the human being as the "only finite being able to aspire to infinity."\(^7\)

It is significant that as late as 1948, on the occasion of the publication in Mexico of the Spanish version of *Experience and Nature*, José Gaos, a Spanish philosopher, lamented the lack of interest in translating Dewey's philosophical work into Spanish. Gaos interpreted this lack of interest as a deficiency in the Spanish-speaking world. Dewey's pragmatism embodied the challenge of modernity, which for Gaos was ultimately the relationship between immanence and transcendence. Dewey, Gaos said, tried to deal with the gap between these two worlds by naturalizing both human-hood and God.\(^7\) Hurtado could not accept this solution; neither could the members of the Institución. It went too far for them. The Institución defended a free school. However, the proposal advanced by the Institución compensated for the lack of an explicit confessional foundation with a transcendental vision of human-hood.

The readings that the members of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza and Hurtado made of Dewey's work unveil the difficulties in rethinking in modern terms a concept of education rooted in centuries of tradition. Dewey understood well these difficulties when he wrote in 1909 in *The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy*: "Old ideas give way slowly; for they are more than abstract logical forms and categories. They are habits, predispositions, deeply ingrained attitudes of aversion and preference."\(^7\)

The two scenarios show not only that habits and belief systems set limits to what can be integrated in a concept of education, but also the relevance of contingent conditions in the articulation of educational theories and practices. Perhaps, education, more than any other field, illustrates that science and modernity could not suppress what Charles Taylor construed as "the need to articulate a sense of something fuller, deeper."\(^7\) The need to rethink education a new beyond contingency and traditions would lead to a break and to an untenable ahistorical situation.

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NOTES

10. José Luis Abellán, Historia Crítica del Pensamiento Español, IV (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1984), 455. [This is a book constituted by various volumes. Number IV refers to the volume.]

16. Ibid., 213.
17. Andrés Baiza Ruz, “La Dimensiones del Krausismo en Chile: Modernización, Nacionalismo, y la Institución Juvenil,” Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, El Pensamiento de Darwin y la Psicología de la Didelphisa (Santiago, Chile: Ediciones de la Universidad de Chile, 1934), Doctrina y Praxis de los Estudiantes, 1934–1935. She examines the impact of religious educational discourse, the opposition from the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church on the educational policies of the Party.
in Spain and Spanish America.” International B. Inv. Educ. 16, Faculty of Education, 16, Faculty of Education, 357.


16. Ibid., 213.


18. Rosa Bruno-Jofré is completing an analysis of the Jesuit Fernando Vives del Solar’s writings with attention to the Spanish context in which Vives developed his spirituality at the beginning of the century, his second exile—this time in Spain (1918–31), and his work during the last four years of his life (1931–35). She examines the conceptual field configuring his political and religious educational discourse, the creation of the Social League, and the opposition from the hierarchy of the Church and its close ally, the Conservative Party.


20. Jaime Caicedo Escudero, *El P. Alberto Hurtado y John Dewey: Presencia Educativa de su Pensamiento en Chile* (Faculty of Education, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 1986) says that Hurtado studied pedagogy in obedience to his superiors. However, Father Samuel Fernández from the Facultad de Teología, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, shared with me a document that made clear that Father Janssens suggested that he study Pedagogy. See Curriculum Vitae del Padre Hurtado. 1936, APH s62y056. It is written by Hurtado in the third person.


23. See Tom DeCoster, Marc Depaepe, Frank Simon, and Angelo Van Gorp, “Dewey in Belgium: A Libration for Modernity?” in *Inventing the Modern

24. In the years between 1936 and 1940, Hurtado was devoted to his pedagogical apostolate and his commitment to religious vocations. He taught, directed groups at the Colegio San Ignacio in Santiago, taught pedagogical psychology at the Catholic University and at the Seminario Pontificio in Santiago, and published a number of articles on pedagogical themes. Samuel Fernández, "Reformar al Individuo o Reformar la Sociedad? Un Punto Central en el Desarrollo Cronológico del Pensamiento Social de San Alberto Hurtado," Teología y Vida XLIX (2008), 515-44, in particular 516. See also Samuel Fernández Eyzaguirre, "El Padre Alberto Hurtado, S.J. y la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile: Un Santo Universitario," Humanitas X, no. 39 (Winter 2005): 458-54.


27. This was a position that already had been proposed by the psychologist and educator from Zurich, Gustav Störring. At the Third International Congress for Philosophy that took place at the University of Heidelberg, in September of 1908, Störring acknowledged the importance of pragmatism at best "for the question of the psychogenesis of thought, but not in a logical-epistemological context" (cf. Jürgen Oelkers "Remarks on the Conceptualization of John Dewey's Democracy and Education," paper presented at the annual John Dewey Society Symposium, Montreal, QC, April 2005).


30. Barnés’ compilation was different from the collection published by Claparède with the same title. The prologue was also published in the Boletín de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza. Domingo Barnés, "La Pedagogía de J. Dewey," Boletín de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza, L, no. 797 (1926): 238-47.


35. John Shook questioned convincingly this line of thinking; he shows that by 1891, Dewey had all of the pieces in place for his instrumentalism. This was five years before he wrote "My Pedagogic Creed." Communication from James Scott Johnston, March 21, 2008.


37. See Caicedo Escudero, Maritain.


39. Catholic Action was seen by San Alberto Hurtado as an instrument to popular education. In Hurtado's words, "Catholic Action is one of the greatest instruments that the Church has to give the people, to give the Gospel to the people and to the Church," Puntos de Educación.

40. Samuel Fernández analyzed Hurtado's position immediately after he returned to Chile in contrast with the Spanish conservative Jesuits. He placed the conflict in a broader context, "Los Primeros Conflictos del Padre Hurtado," Díaz del V., Padre Alberto Hurtado: (Chile, Santiago: Ediciones de la Universidad Católica, 2005), 105.

41. Alberto Hurtado, S.J., Le système pédagogique de la doctrine catholique.

42. Ibid., 104.

43. Ibid., 195.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.

46. It is not surprising to know that Hurtado was a great admirer of the Galileo Galilei and where there was a spirit of freedom of thought and the personality of the individual. Antonio Fernández, "Los Primeros Conflictos del Padre Hurtado," Díaz del V., Padre Alberto Hurtado: (Chile, Santiago: Ediciones de la Universidad Católica, 2005), 105.

47. Ibid., 197.


49. Ibid., 243.

50. Oelkers, "Remarks on the Conceptualization of John Dewey's Democracy and Education."


53. Cf. The Correspondence of John Dewey: 1920-1950, Appendix, "Note to the letter August 28, 1942 (to the Committee of the National Education Association, Studies, Carbondale, IL, on July 26, 1942)."


55. Hurtado, Le système pédagogique, 240.

56. Ibid., 185.

57. Ibid., 100.

58. Ibid., 186.


61. William James, Pragmatism, a New Name for Some Old Views, Popular Lectures on Philosophy (1906), 20.


39. Catholic Action was seen by Saint Hurtado as having an important role in popular education. In Hurtado’s words it would be to make a caricature of the Catholic Action to limit its work to sponsoring commentaries emerging from reading the Gospel and to holding religious practices as a group. Hurtado, Puntos de Educación.
40. Samuel Fernández analyzed Hurtado’s early conflicts inside his Community immediately after he returned to Chile in light of the “spirit of Louvain” in contrast with the Spanish conservative views dominant among Chilean Jesuits. He placed the conflict in a broader context. Samuel Fernández, “Los Primeros Conflictos del Padre Hurtado.” See also Elena Sánchez C. and Lucía Díaz del V., Padre Alberto Hurtado, S.J. La Riqueza de su Pensamiento. (Chile, Santiago: Ediciones de la Universidad Católica de Chile, 2005), 13.
42. Ibid., 104.
43. Ibid., 195.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. It is not surprising to know that Hurtado felt more comfortable in Louvain where there was a spirit of freedom and respect for personal autonomy and the personality of the individual than in Spain where rigidity dominated. Fernández, “Los Primeros Conflictos del Padre Hurtado,” 620.
47. Ibid., 197.
49. Ibid., 243.
50. Oelkers, “Remarks on the Conceptualization of John Dewey’s Democracy and Education.”
55. Hurtado, Le système pédagogique, 209.
56. Ibid., 185.
57. Ibid., 100.
58. Ibid., 186.
60. Hurtado, Le système pédagogique, 196-97.
3 Dewey in Argentine Tradition, Intensification, and the Production of Knowledge

Marcelo Caruso

In Argentina, the name of John Dewey was known to educational debates since the beginning of the 20th century, but it was only with the arrival of the Perón government in 1943 that it began to be read and known by the masses. As in many other countries, the name of Dewey became a symbol of educational liberalism, pragmatism, and pedagogy, and educational debate in the period in Argentina was much loved as it was attacked.

One of the most striking and influential stories of Dewey’s name being pronounced in Argentina prior to the national government of Juan Domingo Perón, in the midst of a heated debate. During a meeting held at the Inspectorate of the local Teachers’ College, the Dean Bruno Genta shouted in front of the entire audience to attend on threat of dismissal: “...must be eradicated from Argentine education. Dewey must be replaced by the traditional pedagogy in a repressive context with a national-Catholic ideology.”

Perónism in those years. At a time when the anecdote in the weekly Tiempo magazine told the story of a laconic term: “The item about which the circumstances there, I regard it as the end...”

It is indeed much-telling that Dewey's name is so deeply ingrained in Genta's portrayal of the era. In the dramatic months, and following the national debate was extremely political, the coalition of traditional pa...