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Introduction: Catholic education across time and space: from educational projects in early modernity, through colonial education, to opening spaces of social transformation

Introducción: La educación católica a través del tiempo y del espacio: de los proyectos educativos en la modernidad temprana, pasando por la educación colonial, a la apertura de espacios de transformación social.

L'Introduction: L'Éducation catholique à travers le temps et l'espace: en partant des projets éducatifs du début de la modernité, en passant par l'éducation coloniale, jusqu'à l'ouverture d'espaces de transformation sociale

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The Catholic Church, like other Christian churches, played a role in the “design” of modern schooling and its diffusion following a complicated journey that started in early modernity, in the sixteenth century. Schooling became a response to the challenges the Church confronted: deviation from the faith, social problems generated by poverty, and the need to carve a Catholic social order in the new scheme of things. The Protestant reformations, doctrinal debates inside the Church, religious wars, Renaissance Humanism, and emerging foundational principles of what would become the Enlightenment’s political and moral theories provided a difficult context. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, founders of Catholic congregations and societies developed educational practices that displayed modern principles. This was the case with Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus (approved by the Pope in 1540), which created a network of full-fledged humanistic schools converging with Thomism, albeit for only boys and young men. Other examples are Nicholas Barré, founder in 1666 of the Institute of Charitable Teachers (the future Sisters of the Infant Jesus), and Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, founder in 1684 of the Institute of Christian Brothers, among others. The work of Johann Amos Comenius (1592-1670), a Moravian, pedagogue, and theologian, last bishop of the Unity of Brethren, and author of the *Didactica Magna* (originally published in 1657) where he expounded modern educational principles and methods, had extensive influence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, reaching Catholics as well. This is a topic deserving further exploration.

It is not surprising then that historians of education think of schooling – a component of the modern state – as a secularized version of Christianity, although the reference is not limited to

Catholicism. Bugnard (2013, p. 312) wrote with regard to the *Ratio Studiorum*, the official plan for Jesuit education, that:

The Ratio, diffused and applied at a large temporal and spatial scale, has passed to almost all the programs and pedagogical habitus of the twentieth century a schooling culture that the advocates of the “nouvelle” pedagogy designated as “traditional.” The Ratio has contributed to model the pedagogical order of the secondary school in general lines in schools that were inheritors of the colleges. In a parallel manner, it is necessary to take into account the culture that will mold little by little the elementary level with its own characteristics, adapting the simultaneous methods coming from the colleges’ classes system.

In the long nineteenth century, which O’Malley (2014) extends from the French Revolution to 1958 when Pius XII died, the Church moved to strong anti-modernist and doctrinarian positions. The upheavals of the eighteenth century, the internal doctrinal challenges to the Magisterium and to papal power in previous centuries, the movement toward modern science and the emphasis on reason, and the critical power of the Enlightenment led the Church to an anti-modernist, reactionary, papal centric position. Neo-Scholasticism as an intellectual framework would be the official stance of the Magisterium during this long period. Thus, in 1929, Pius XI’s encyclical *On Christian Education of Youth* (Divini Illus Magistri), which would serve as the reference for Catholic education until the changes generated by Vatican II, still had a strong anti-modernist tone.

Of relevance here is that from the mid-nineteenth century, a large number of apostolic congregations, most of them with a teaching mission, were founded in Europe with approval from the Holy See and that the Church became intensively involved in missions and schooling in the colonies, finding its own space in the processes of colonization. The article by historian and historian of education Marc Depaepe, “Colonial education in the Congo: a question of uncritical pedagogy to the bitter end,” a product of extensive research, examines the particular mental, social, and spatial structures of colonialism, in which the Catholic Church was instrumental in the process of educationalization. In a *longue durée* approach, using a carefully crafted analysis that traces from 1885 to the late 1960s, Depaepe shows how the ultimate educational objectives aimed at discipline and order. The description of the role of the progressive missionaries and the *évolués* (educated elite) as a colonial pedagogical paradox will engage the reader.

We cannot assume uniformity in the Church. Although at the beginning of the twentieth century, the pope forcefully suppressed emerging theological currents that moved beyond the parameters of the Magisterium, new currents announcing the various phases of the *nouvelle théologie* emerged in the 1930s particularly in France and Belgium. Beyond individual approaches to educational practices and progressive pedagogies by Catholic educators from the 1930s, in the second part of the 1950s, there were not only new theological approaches tuning the Church with modernity, which would be influential during the sessions of Vatican II, but also social pastoral movements and an intensification of social action through Catholic Action. The social apostolate was no longer rooted in the notion of charity and assistance. An interesting social apostolate was the worker priest, suspended by John XXIII in 1959, involving a large number of priests and seminarians employed as workers. This had an impact in Spain.

Pere Fullana Puigserver's article, "La educación popular Católica en España: de la caridad y la asistencia al compromiso social (1953-1967)," illustrates the internal transformation of educational Catholicism rooted in educational conceptions and schooling practices that had grown within the schooling model of national Catholicism, and that moved in new directions with the technocratic changes of late Francoism. However, important sectors within the Church developed a critical view of Francoism and developed highly participatory, social pastoral models that embraced a commitment to social transformation even before Vatican II. The author does not neglect in his discussion the role of Catholic Action in Spain and its nuances.

Vatican II (1962-1965) generated a paradigmatic shift (Baum, 2011) that resituated the Church in its relationship with the world, relativized Church positions, moved away from Neo-Scholasticism, and embraced a commitment to social justice. The constitutions, decrees, and declarations produced by the Council had powerful implications for Catholic education and, in particular, on religious education. Joe Stafford uses archival and secondary sources in his paper, "An analysis of the fundamental shift in Catholic secondary religious education during the long sixties, 1955-1973," to explore the aftermath of the decisions of Vatican II and the confusion that pervaded the teaching of religion at the secondary level, with particular reference to the province of Ontario, Canada. Educators had great difficulties finding a balance between the focus on individual personal transformation and the transmission of Church teachings. The rapid movement away from Neo-Scholasticism (strict neo-Thomism) as the only intellectual and theological framework to embrace both a subjective approach and a developmental notion of Church tradition created disorientation. In the case of Ontario, where strict neo-Thomism had actually been enforced in Catholic schools, the transition was more difficult.

The long 1960s also signal a time of the women's emancipation movement and radical politics along with a process of secularization; consecrated members of the Catholic Church were themselves protagonists in these processes of change. Heidi MacDonald, in her article, "Transforming Catholic women's education in the sixties: Sister Catherine Wallace's feminist leadership at Mount Saint Vincent University," traces the career of Catherine Wallace, who was appointed university president in 1965. Wallace ran this sole degree-granting women's post-secondary institution until 1974, leading a transformative process of renewal with an outward vision and a clear awareness of the demands of second-wave feminism, while building a national profile particularly through her participation in the executive of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC).

The long 1960s (Marwick, 1998) brought Vatican Council II. The Council itself needs to be placed within broader social and cultural changes that included the weakening of the social hegemony of religion, particularly traditional churches, the criticism of authority structures, post-colonial movements, the Latin American urge for social transformation, and the questioning of US foreign policies. The emergence and consequent consolidation of liberation theology in Medellín in 1968 became a major intersection colouring social pastoral work and popular education. The adult literacy projects in Brazil, including the Movement for Grassroots Education sponsored by Catholic bishops, and related socio-cultural movements had a transformative dimension. Consciousness raising in the popular sectors of society was an important objective. Paulo Freire, Catholic educator and philosopher of education, engaged with the grassroots movement, and later, as director of the University of Recife's Cultural Extension Program, developed a new literacy approach rooted in people's everyday lives. Freire, whose

intellectual framework became more radicalized during his time in Chile, embodies an epistemic break in pedagogical thinking.

The work of Paulo Freire and his eclectic way of thinking, quite embedded in liberation theology and influenced by Marxist intellectual interpretations of the late 1960s and early 1970s, can be analyzed from various perspectives. Author Fred Harris examines both Freire's and John Dewey's critique of capitalism from a Marxist perspective, using as reference the relation between common sense and scientific inquiry. Harris' article "Dewey's and Freire's popular philosophies of Education in a capitalist context," introduces readers to three critiques of capitalist relations: those of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Karl Marx. Harris concludes that a synthesis of the three approaches within the philosophy of education would serve the needs of the working class. It is interesting that the author builds the argument around the concepts of scientific induction in relation to Dewey and Marx and of humanist ethics in relation to Freire.

Freire is the object of attention in Sam Rocha and Adi Burton's paper entitled, "The Eros of the Meal: Passover, Eucharist, Education." The authors intertwine theology and the philosophy of education with communion as a central theme and turn to the universality of the Meal, including the education of the meal, to posit the mysterious freedom of Eros as a condition for a true and lasting communion that is essential to a liberating education – thinking which often goes missing in critical pedagogies of a Marxist bent. In this peculiar approach to Freire, Rocha and Burton see, at the heart of Freire's critique, a pastoral diagnosis echoed by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

The special feature article brings us to contemporary issues. The paper authored by Tom O'Donoghue, Jim Gleeson, and Orla McCormack is entitled, "National Newspaper-reporting on state examinations: an historical exposition of the exceptional case of the Irish leaving certificate." The authors pose new questions that lead to the analysis of two major newspapers, the *Irish Independent* and *The Irish Times*, and their coverage of examination results and the related burgeoning of sales and advertising in the midst of increasing school completion rates from the mid-1980s to the current day. Of great interest is the analysis of the implications of the approach to examination in Ireland for the teaching profession, in that it turns teachers into technicians.

This issue of *Encounters* closes with a conversation with Prof. Dr. Juan José Etxeberria, S.J., Vice-Rector for University Community, Identity and Mission of the University of Deusto. An introductory account of the history of the Society of Jesus and its work in higher education over five hundred years, a reference to the history of the University of Deusto and its focus on research and education, and a discussion of the trajectory of Father Prof. Etxeberria, a Dr. of Canon Law, provide the framework for the interview. The reader will become familiar not only with the University of Deusto, but with the current vision and mission of the Society of Jesus and of a Jesuit university and its intellectual apostolate.

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