

Rosa Bruno-Jofré and Jon Igelmo Zaldívar, eds. Catholic Education in the Wake of Vatican II

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RECENSIONI / BOOK REVIEWS / REVUES DES LIVRES

Rosa Bruno-Jofré and Jon Igelmo Zaldívar, eds. *Catholic Education in the Wake of Vatican II*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017. Pp. 348. ISBN 9781487502065.

Catholic Education in the Wake of Vatican II is an edited volume that examines the impact of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (1962–65), commonly known as Vatican II, on Catholic education in France, Spain, Mexico, Chile, and Canada. Intended to update Catholic practices by going back to history, i.e. to couple *aggiornamento* and *approfondimento*, the twenty-first ecumenical council produced sixteen documents, including the Declaration on Christian Education (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 1966). In contrast to preceding papal encyclicals that advocated neo-Thomism as a framework for educating a youth in need of authority, the Vatican II Declaration has an agenda sentient to a person's experience and the stirring plurality of everyday life around the globe. In the spirit of the same plurality, this work presents a historical medley of essays structured in a series of six parts. The volume binds together a plethora of historians, theologians, sociologists, educational theorists, and philosophers that distinctly reflect on case studies through what the editors name the Catholic education's global/transnational *longue durée*.

In part one, theologian Michael Attridge roughly sketches the evolution and the demise of neo-Thomism contrasted with the new theological method induced by Vatican II. Vatican II, Attridge claims, resolved the protracted ecclesiastical dispute “back to Kant — back to Thomas.” According to Attridge, the Declaration transformed the dominant theocentric, deductive, and ahistorical educational method into an anthropocentric model concerned with modern apprehensions, social unity, and history. As the author reflects mostly on the writings of established theologians, such as Karl Rahner (1904–84), Bernard Lonergan (1904–84), and David Tracy (1939–), he fixes the discussion on the shaping of the documentary and the systematic representation of global Catholic education.

Moving from the notional sphere to two European localities, part two of the volume introduces Catholic education in France (1789–1959) and Spain (1939–75). Historian and theoretician of education Carlos Martínez Valle argues

that Spain underwent social structural changes that transformed the ways of living religion during the Franco dictatorship. According to Valle, even though the Spanish Catholic Church's official status remained unchanged, paradigms of secularization that differentiated religion as one social sub-system among others, converted conceptions of the nature of the human. Valle renders these processes visible by analyzing receptions of John Dewey's theories and studying select pastoral uses of active pedagogical methods such as the debate circles, the Sofa, and Joseph Cardijn's Life Review. In contrast to Attridge, Valle unravels the gradual on-the-ground changes of the Spanish Catholic educational method, focusing on the relationship between church and state.

Part three takes this affiliation of church and state as its primary facet to analyze Canadian and South American contexts. Bruno-Jofré makes the case that teaching congregations in Canada enabled the making of social, religious, and political spaces deemed desirable by governing structures. In the same vein, in an essay on Ivan Illich's work in Cuernavaca, Mexico, Bruno-Jofré and Zaldívar poignantly convey Illich's critique of the Church in its institutional garb. Illich differentiated two forms of the Church: The Church as *She* (the living embodiment of the Christian community) and the Church as *It* (a self-serving worldly power). Following early visions of the missionary's role, Illich advocated for the Church as *She* and asked educators to incarnate themselves in their host cultures. However, even though Illich criticized both the Church's and North America's projects for Latin America, Bruno-Jofré and Zaldívar claim that his ideas were not related to local ideological configurations such as liberal theology. Instead, according to the editors, Illich correlated to modern educational theories, i.e., modern pedagogy and science.

Moving through part four, which reflects on Ontario's modern insulation of Catholic education and Chile's reservation of Catholic schools for elites, part five examines the relationship between Catholicism and Aboriginal Education in Canada. Coming from Indigenous studies, Christopher Beeman argues that the Catholic education of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, was predisposed to failure by design. Beeman isolates an unsolvable paradox from the coupling of Catholicism and colonialism: how does one respect a person's being (thus, deems it worthy of "saving") while attempting to obliterate that being? Moreover, Beeman concludes that even the Vatican II Declaration has not met Aboriginal students' needs in Canada.

In the concluding remarks of part six, theologian Gemma Serrano and Valle deliberate on the volume and indicate persistent lacunae in need of future scrutiny. They summarize the book as a series of snapshots that intentionally renders a fragmentary outlook. Indeed, the volume's strength is its fragmentary character that enables narrow and comprehensive analyses of select case studies. However, amid such a myriad of stories, the voices of students, followers, believers, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit are lacking. References to the making and the content of the Declaration are wanting as well.

To sum up, on the one hand, even though the collection challenges the unilateral narrative stemming from the Catholic Church by entangling other power-yielding institutions such as missions, school commissions, and the state, the reports remain focused on the side struggling to deal with pluralities and rarely cross over to the pluralities' side. On the other hand, there is a lack of considerations of the Vatican II Declaration. Overall, the book is sensibly put together. Its interdisciplinary character could be valuable to a diverse audience comprising theologians, philosophers, historians, historiographers, and researchers from the political sciences and indigenous studies.

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Veronica Vegna. *Donne, mafia e cinema. Una prospettiva interdisciplinare.* Ravenna: Longo, 2017. Pp. 156. ISBN 9788880639664.

This elegantly written book on women, mafia, and cinema displays the experimental and favorable aspects of the approach and design of academic research. It has an introduction followed by three main chapters devoted, respectively, to mothers, wives, and lovers in relation to the mafia within the contextual study of specific films. The last part of the book contains a conclusion, as well as an appendix, with three interviews: one with Piera Aiello, who is a famous police informant and politician known for her stand against the mafia; another with Anna Puglisi, a sociologist and founder of the Sicilian Center of documentation “Giuseppe Impastato,” which was the first study center of mafia in Italy; and the last one with Lucia Sardo, the actress who interprets the role of the mother in two films analyzed in this book. It contains a bibliography, a useful list of cited films, as well